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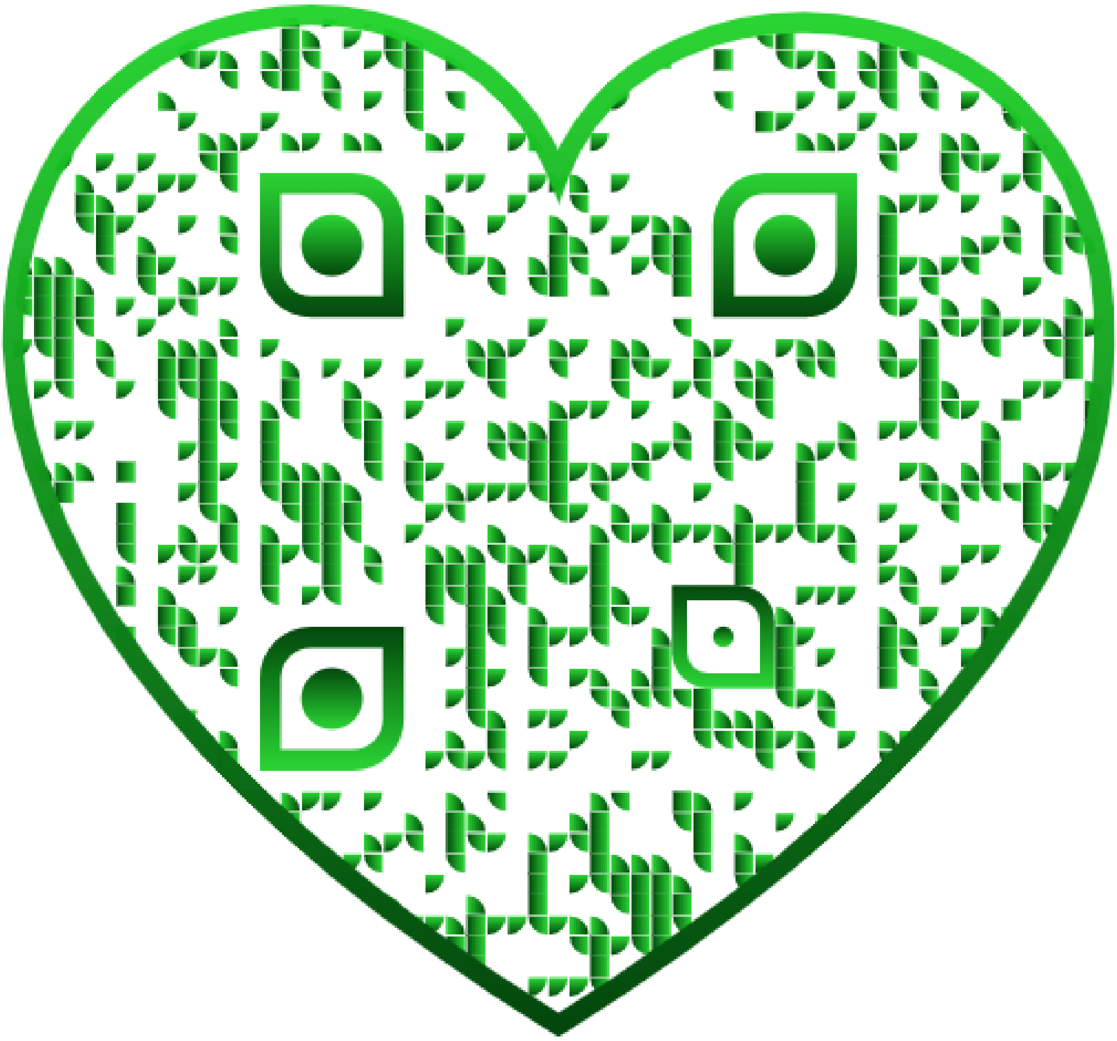

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A new house in Vancouver by Patkau Architects is animated by an origami-like wood facade. Photos here and on cover by James Dow

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From the Editor

Living Well

There’s always one project that you just have to get. As an A&D magazine editor, I have been guilty of craving a fantastic home that I know is just about complete, just about to be photographed. This time around, that holy grail was Ulster House, designed by LGA Architectural Partners. I had been following the project’s trajectory ever since I learned about ReHousing, a research initiative that attempts to provide the fledgling citizen-builder with tools to expand on existing houses and urban lots in Toronto. Janna Levitt (one of ReHousing’s founders) and Dean Goodman, partners in work and life, were using their own architectural undertaking as a paragon — a compelling case study for a tool kit that has major ambitions to densify our single-family neighbourhoods.

What they’ve created is not just a prototype — it’s a warm, lovely and inspiring home (“Citizen/Developer/Designer,” page 64). It speaks of both the big concept and the material decisions that go into crafting a considered living space. I am so happy to show it in our 2025 Houses Issue alongside other works that similarly build on major ideas. Also in Toronto, we spend some time in East Bayfront, where Denmark’s 3XN has created a trio — two striking mid-rise residential projects and a tall timber office building — that is defining a new waterfront district (“3XN Takes (a Corner of) Toronto,” page 70). Then there’s our cover star, by Vancouver’s Patkau Architects: a house that dreams big, letting in the city but filtering out the noise (“Out of the Ordinary,” page 52).

Rounding out our Jan/Feb lineup is a profile of New York’s SO – IL (page 76), whose co-founders provide a master class in working within the confines — the spreadsheets and algorithms — that govern real estate development while also bringing into being multi-unit structures that introduce new and exciting dynamics into everyday living. And we spend some time inside MAD’s eye-popping condo mid-rise in Denver (page 38), with its canyon-like cascade of outdoor spaces.

We’re super proud of this issue, which also highlights the best from the furniture fair Feria Hàbitat and the tile extravaganza Cersaie — and puts the design of bedrooms in the Spotlight. It doesn’t get cozier than that.

Elizabeth Pagliacolo, Editor

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Cosmic Couture

Outer space may once have been the exclusive domain of professional astronauts, but in recent years, interstellar tourism company Axiom Space has opened up the cosmos to any run-of-the-mill business tycoon seeking an otherworldly vista. (Tickets for its private 2022 trip to the International Space Station reportedly ran a cool US$55 million.) But along with catering to this luxury clientele, Axiom is working to invest in scientific exploration and infrastructure initiatives, too.

One of its latest ventures is developing spacesuits for NASA's upcoming Artemis III mission, set to be both the first lunar landing since 1972 and the first time that a woman and person of colour will walk on the moon. Unveiled this past fall, the Axiom Extravehicular Mobility Unit incorporates design input from an unexpected collaborator: Prada. Leveraging its expertise with technical fabrics, the fashion house engineered the suits with a focus on flexibility and range of motion; for instance, the gloves are fine-tuned to enable the easier operation of specialized tools. And while the ensembles will be worn by highly trained crewmembers, Axiom Space's business model means this probably isn't the last we've heard of galactic tailoring. As orbital travel picks up, we're entering a new chapter of celestial design. Perhaps space isn't the final frontier after all — maybe it's just another runway. _ERIC MUTRIE **az**

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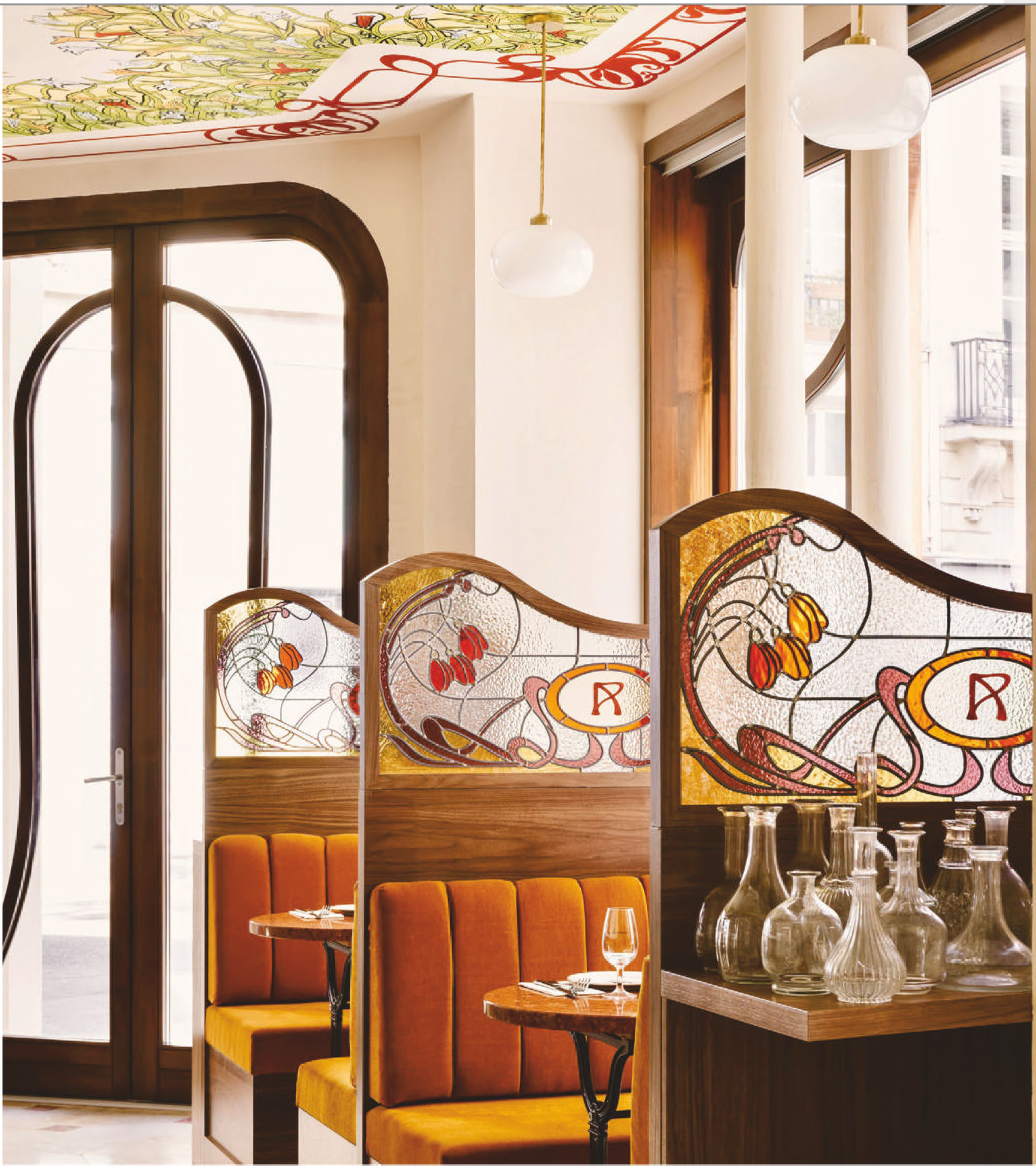


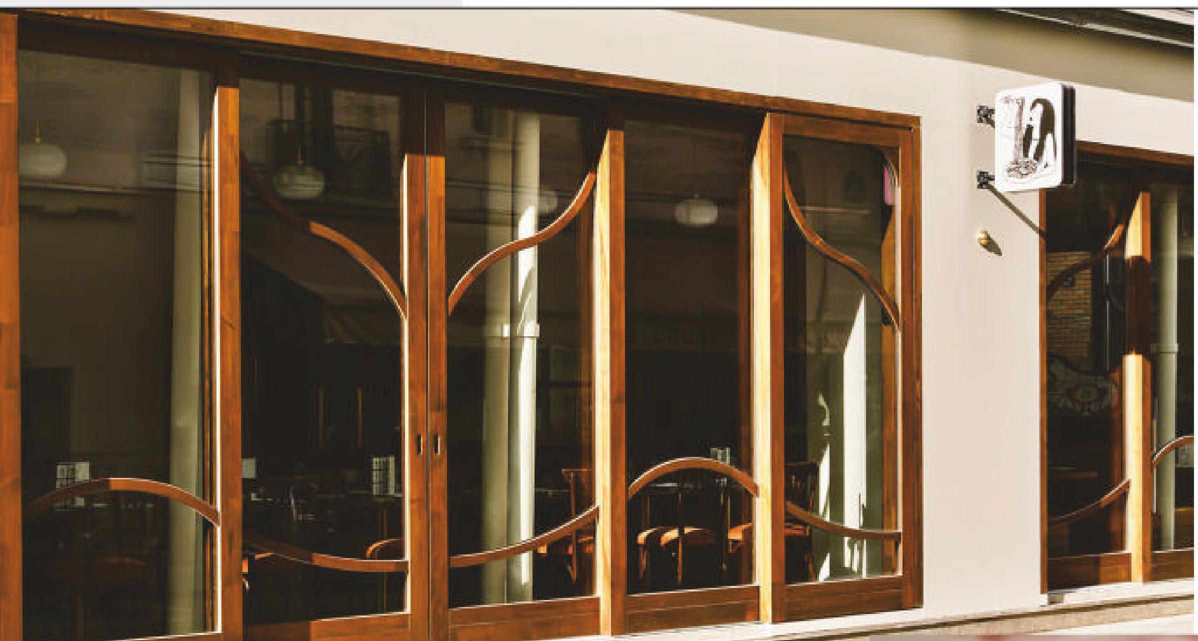
Olive *Jardin*

A PARISIAN PASTA RESTAURANT FILLS A GOLDEN DINING ROOM WITH ORNATE FLOURISHES

STORY _Eric Mutrie
PHOTOS _Isabela Mayer

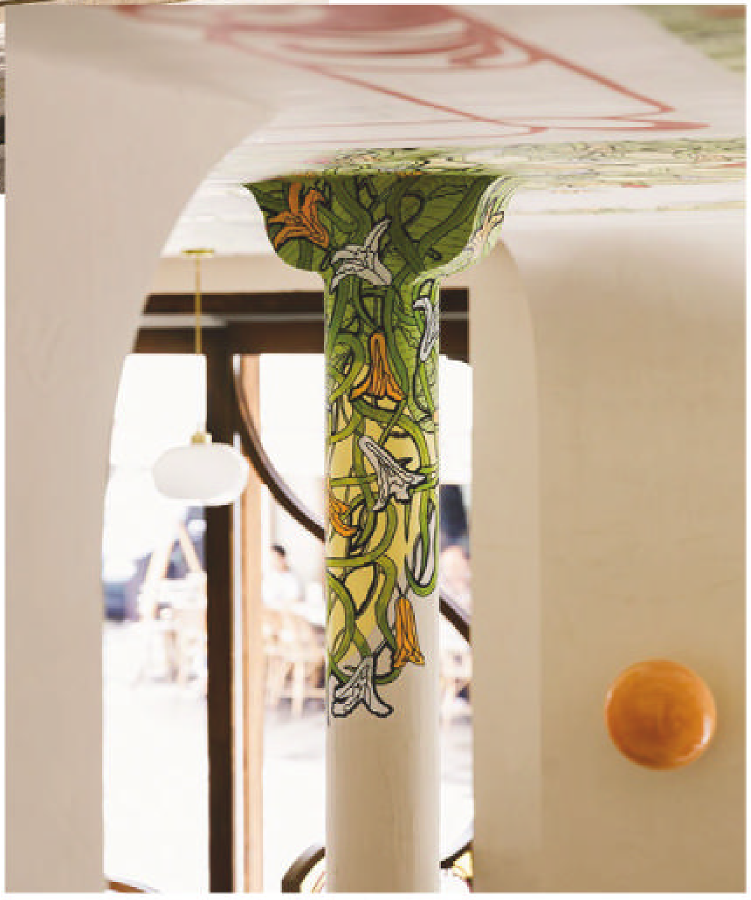
1. The Brief

Heading out for an Italian dinner in Paris might seem counterintuitive. Then again, you can't eat escargot every night. And at Adela, which opened in the City of Light in July, fresh pasta is presented with distinctly French flair. Credit for the restaurant's chic environment goes to local architect Jessica Mille, who filled the space with art nouveau references, in part to play up the link between Adela's fusion of two different cultural identities. "Since the early 20th century, art nouveau has been synonymous with French brasseries, which often sought to distinguish themselves with stylish craft elements," she says. "But I also see it in some ways as a resurrection of the Baroque movement, which has Italian roots." Adela's owners, a couple in their twenties, sought out Mille — a fixture in the Paris hospitality scene — specifically for her ability to reinterpret history through a contemporary lens. In other words, Adela may be a thoughtful tribute to the past, but there are plenty of fun updates in the mix, too. "Our specialty is using colours and materials to bring a lively touch to classic codes," Mille explains.



← 2. The Setting

In some ways, Mille's approach to Adela's design is also a reflection of the restaurant's location in the Grands Boulevards area of Paris. "It's known for its bohemian atmosphere, having attracted writers, artists and intellectuals over the decades, and is now filled with art galleries, theatres and music venues," she says. "I wanted to capture that artistry." She felt especially inspired by 14 rue d'Abbeville, a nearby building that makes a bold break from the austerity of the neighbouring Haussmann-style architecture with floral stoneware adornments. While the influence of the 1901 landmark can best be seen *inside* Adela, Mille did make some updates to the restaurant's facade, retrofitting the ground floor of its building (which previously housed an Asian bistro) with walnut-framed sliding doors embellished with curvy woodwork.

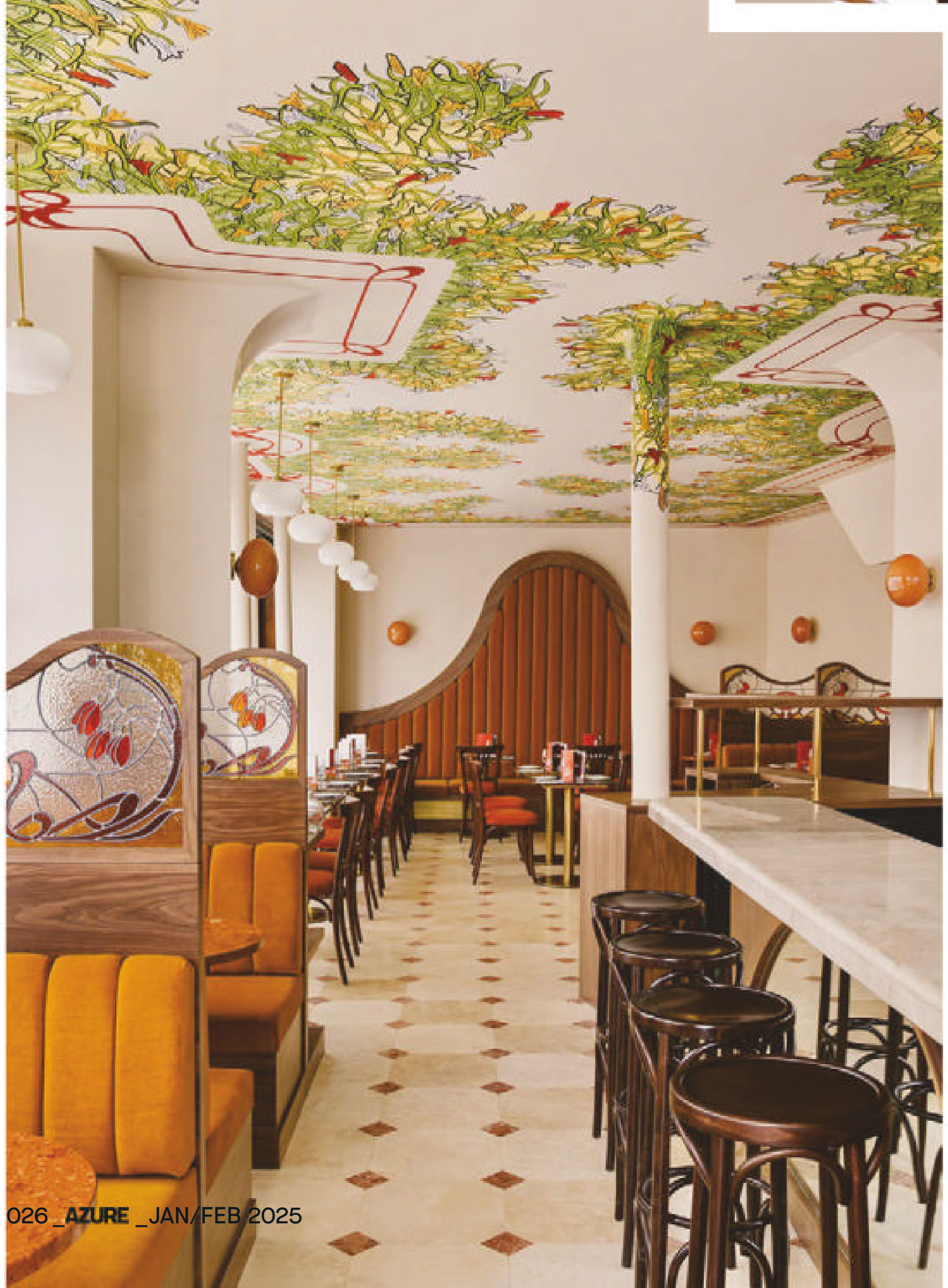


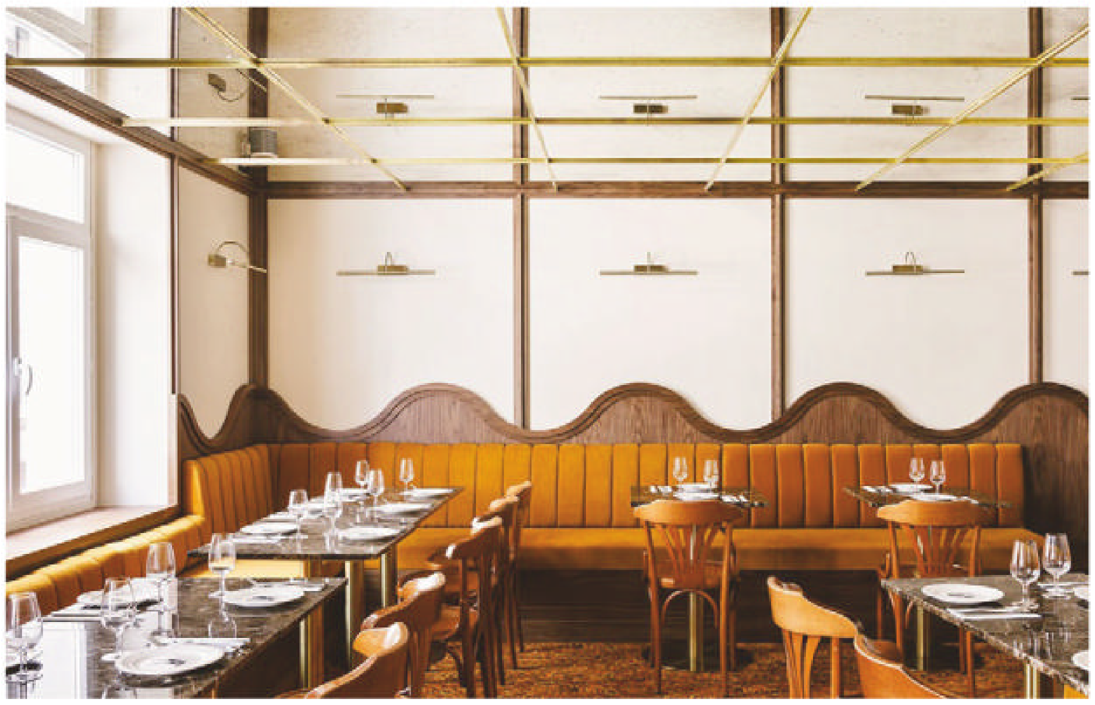
↓ 3. The Design

Adela's kitchen is spread across three floors: Pasta dough is made in the basement, then cut into shape by chefs on the ground floor before finally being cooked upstairs. (A dumb waiter facilitates delivery between the various levels.) Throughout the two-storey dining area, winding lines echo this sense of flow. Knowing that sinuous geometry is a hallmark of art nouveau design, Mille set out to evoke images of unfurled calligraphy. "The first letter of Adela, a capital A, was the starting point," she says. "But pasta shapes and ribbon also fed into the design process."

← 4. The Details

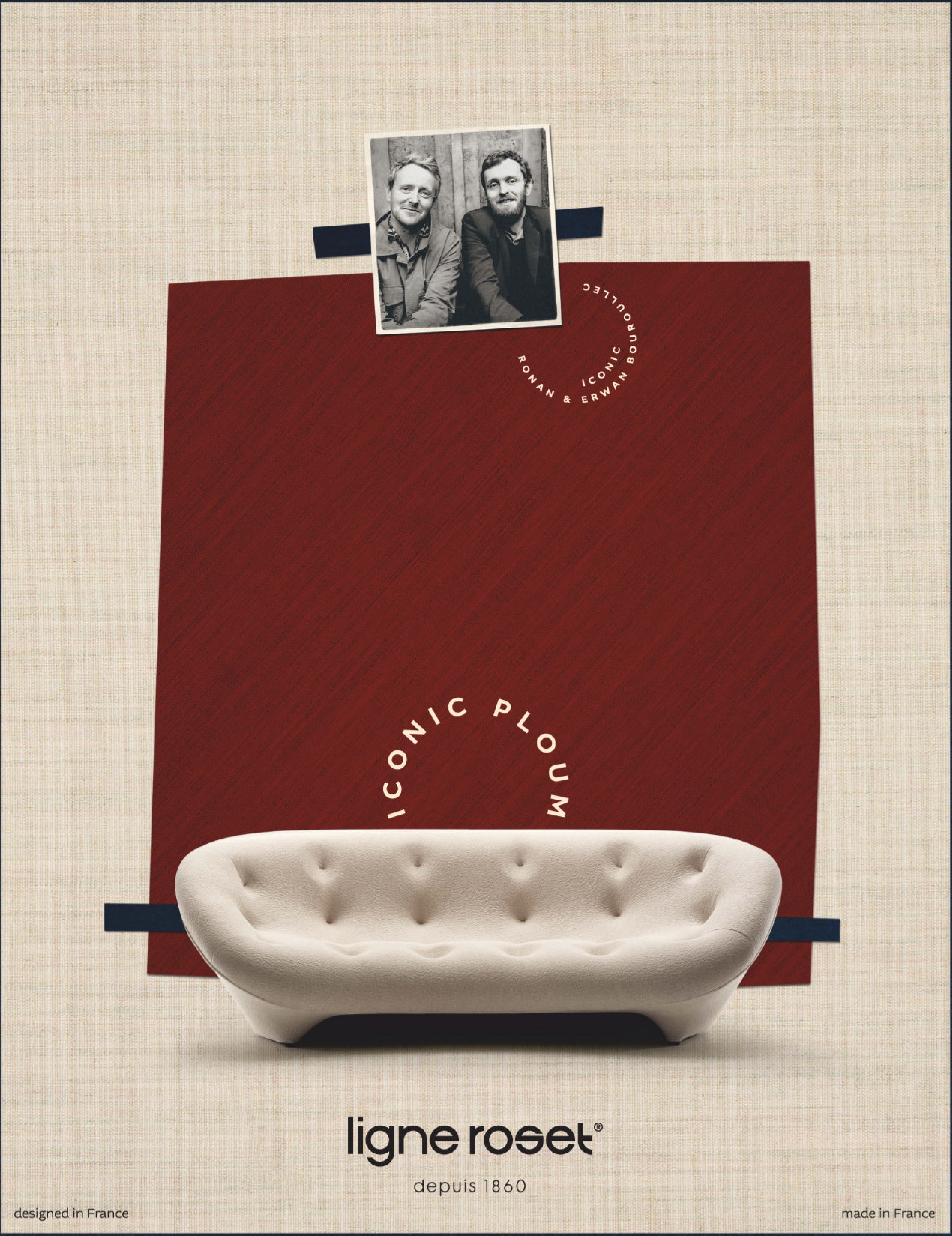
Continuing the project's revivalist spirit, Mille enlisted a team of artisans with time-honoured skills. The ground floor's botanical fresco (which continues onto one of the dining room's columns) is the work of Victor Brun, a graduate of the Royal Academy of Fine Arts of Brussels. "He painted it over two weeks, lying on scaffolding," recalls Mille. "I gave him simple directions: I wanted floral patterns, pop colours, and a contrasting border, which is typical of the art nouveau movement, and is called the whiplash line." Studio Vitrail Bianconi, a local stained-glass specialist, handled the booth dividers. "I immediately loved their approach, combining a great mastery of traditional knowledge with modernity," Mille says. "I gave them maximum freedom."





↑ 5. The Scene

Maintaining Mille's balance between traditional brasserie style and modern edge, orange travertine tiles amp up cabochon flooring, while velvet cushions on the Thonet dining chairs coordinate with a wavelike feature wall. Another eclectic pairing awaits upstairs, where a mirrored ceiling reflects animal-print carpeting. A fun flirtation between various places, styles and time periods, Adela understands that pasta may start off rigid and dry, but it's meant to be served loose and springy. (Mille's go-to? *Triangoli alla Norma*, a Sicilian dish with eggplant and ricotta.) **az**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A Meeting of the Minds

SINCE STARTING AT MINOTTI AS A COVERT AGENT, HANNES PEER HAS EMERGED AS THE COMPANY'S LEADING CREATIVE FORCE

STORY _Elizabeth Pagliacolo

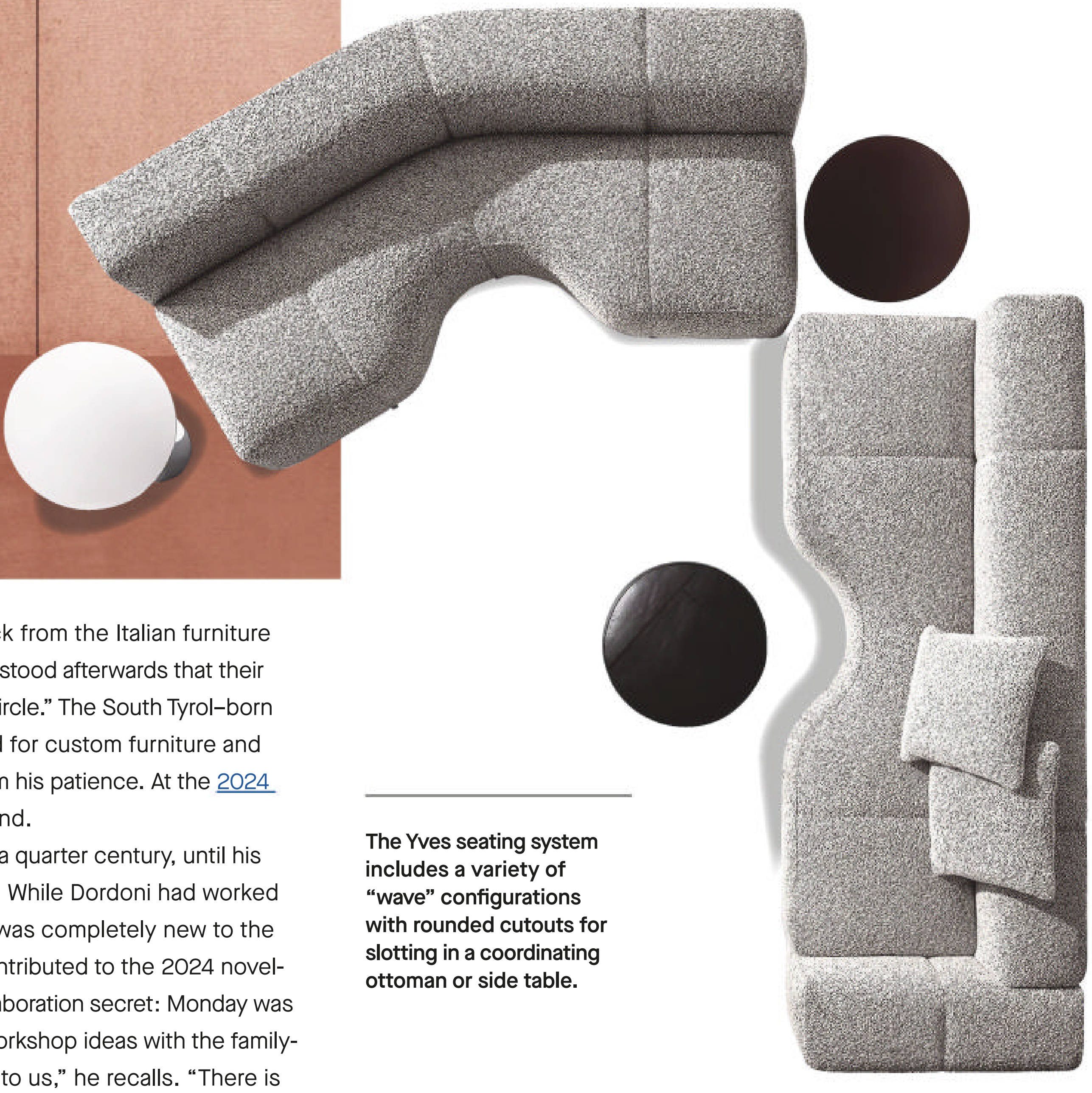
After his initial meeting with Minotti, Hannes Peer did not hear back from the Italian furniture manufacturer for two years. But he wasn't being ghosted. "I only understood afterwards that their selection process takes that long — to let someone inside the magic circle." The South Tyrol–born architect, who had built a reputation for opulent interior projects and for custom furniture and lighting that walked the line between art and design, would benefit from his patience. At the 2024 Salone del Mobile, he introduced a 22-piece collection with the brand.

For Minotti, the launch also represented a historical departure. For a quarter century, until his death in 2023, Rodolfo Dordoni had helmed the brand's art direction. While Dordoni had worked with outside talents, including Nendo and GamFratesi, Hannes Peer was completely new to the table — and he turned out to be the most prolific of the roster that contributed to the 2024 novelties. He kicked off the partnership with an NDA that would keep his collaboration secret: Monday was "Minotti Day" for Peer, who would disappear from his busy studio to workshop ideas with the family-owned company. "We would always have our sketchbooks right next to us," he recalls. "There is a flow of ideas; you grasp the flow and put it on paper. Roberto Minotti is such a good sketcher — I'm not bad myself — and we were sketching non-stop, during breakfast, lunch, dinner."

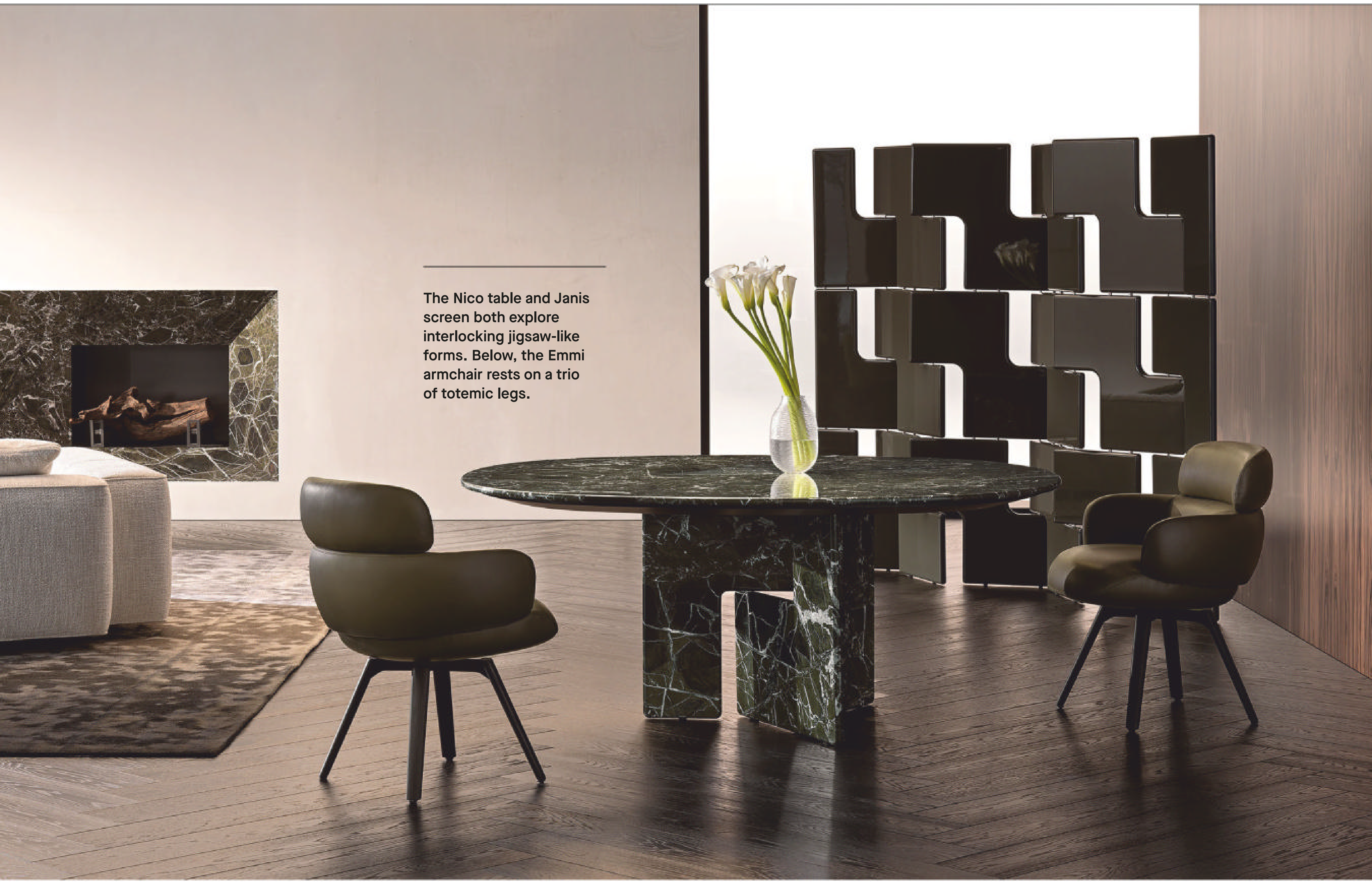
The '70s as Starting Point

Peer's conceptual references span the world of architecture and design — he cites Gae Aulenti, Nanda Vigo, Vladimir Kagan and Angelo Mangiarotti as inspirations — as well as art and fashion. He feels an affinity for Isamu Noguchi, Piet Mondrian and Yves Saint Laurent. The latter introduced Mondrian's colour blocking to cocktail dresses in the 1970s — and that special trio of YSL, Mondrian and the utopian ambitions of that particular decade has special resonance for Peer. The first suite in his collection for Minotti was the expansive Yves seating series, which features a seam detail that recalls haute couture tailoring. "Then we spun it even further," Peer says. "Wherever the vertical stitching would almost reach the floor, it would meet a wonderful double torus, or *doppio toro* in Italian."

Featuring conventional sofas, open-end units, chaises longues and lounge sofas with curvaceous voids where a round ottoman or circular side table could be comfortably nested, the Yves system introduces an organic language to Minotti. "Softness is not immediately translatable in perfection. And Minotti is famous for this incredible perfection. For them, it was unprecedented," Peer explains. "They were used to a certain classical and quote-unquote masculine shape, which I absolutely adore. But I said, 'Let's play with it.'" That play resulted in 300 catalogue pages of variations in which the sofa landscape takes shape.



The Yves seating system includes a variety of "wave" configurations with rounded cutouts for slotting in a coordinating ottoman or side table.



The Nico table and Janis screen both explore interlocking jigsaw-like forms. Below, the Emmi armchair rests on a trio of totemic legs.

Architecture unto Itself

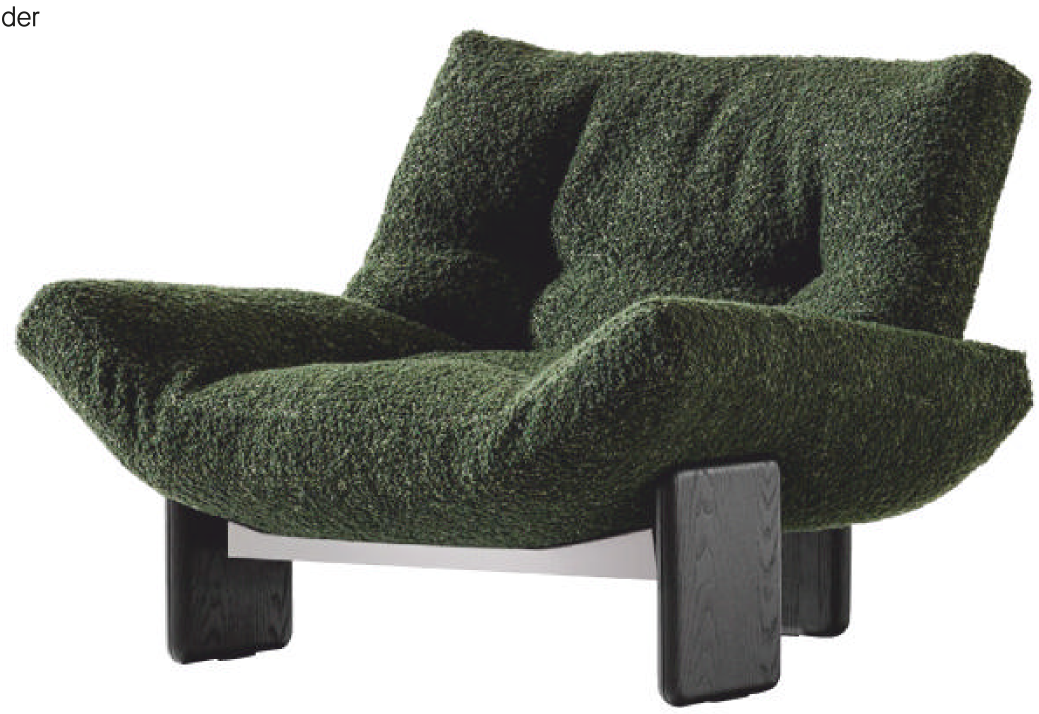
After the Yves sofa, the manufacturer threw Peer a curveball. "They were longing for a design that would be a stand-alone piece, which is very un-Minotti. They were always about cohesiveness and almost a 'total look.' But they were asking me for a design that would be cohesive within the Minotti world, but at the same time could be a very strong editorial piece that could adorn the most beautiful magazines in the world and stand by itself." Peer, who had studied at the Politecnico di Milano and worked for Rem Koolhaas, set out to envision something distinctly architectural. "For me, it all comes from architecture and goes back to architecture. You can consider my furniture micro-architectures. They always relate to the surrounding context."

First in this next series is the Nico table, with its attention-grabbing base made of two interlocking marble elements shaped like an S and an L. (That motif reappears, in a bigger and bolder way, in the Janis screen.) "With such relatively simple forms, I was able to create such a sculptural piece. It's minimalist on one side, but it's very sculptural on the other."

A Shared Connection

Among the collection's other pieces, the Emmi armchair and the Drake coffee table achieve a delicate Noguchi-esque balance. Emmi's seat and Drake's top feel as if they're floating on their frames, evoking the Sistine Chapel's almost-touching fingers, to borrow an art-world metaphor that Peer loves. ("Michelangelo literally invented abstract art when he decided to not finish the *Pietà*.")

Emmi would turn out to be his favourite piece, and it epitomizes a working relationship three years in the forging. "With Emmi, I truly feel that Minotti had to take the biggest leap to move towards me. And I had to make the biggest effort to move towards Minotti. It's very different from the brand's original DNA, but it is also so, so, so Minotti." It required 15 prototypes to perfect its dual nature of daring sculpture and tailored furnishing. "I like to flip it upside down to show the understructure and how sophisticated it actually is to make it seem so effortless." **az**



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All Work — and All Play, Too

BACK IN THE OFFICE SOME 50 YEARS AFTER ITS DEBUT, KNOLL'S REISSUED TASK CHAIR IS AS JOYFUL AS EVER

STORY _Eric Mutrie

When designers Bruce Hannah and Andrew Morrison unveiled their Morrison Hannah chair (originally known as the 2300 Series) back in 1973, Knoll held a splashy launch event at NYC's then–newly completed World Trade Center. Among those in attendance was Rowena Reed Kostellow, who had been one of Hannah and Morrison's favourite teachers at the Pratt Institute. "She was wearing a dramatic cloak that day, so I remember her swirling around to evaluate the design, and then singing our praises to the press," recalls Hannah. But five minutes later, he felt Kostellow tug at his arm. "She told me, 'Bruce, you know, the back curve is lovely. But the front curve still needs a little work.' And 50 years later, I finally got the chance to make some adjustments." This past fall, Knoll reissued the Morrison Hannah chair with a few modest updates. In some ways, the relaunch is bittersweet: Morrison passed away in 2021, and Hannah feels his absence keenly. "But it's also quite a gift to have this happen," he says. "I'm 83 now and it's like, come on — this just gets better."

PHOTOS COURTESY OF KNOLL

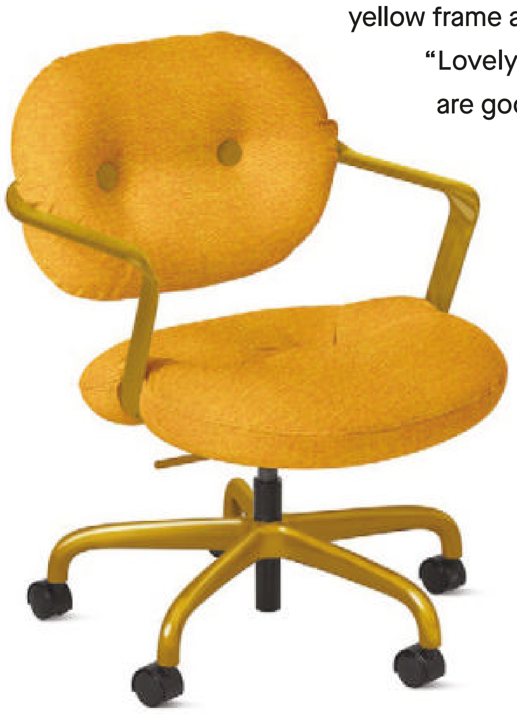
Knoll Knoll

1973

Sleeping on the job is generally frowned upon. But that didn't stop Hannah and Morrison from bolting two pillows to a metal frame while developing their initial concept. "We were trying to make a task chair with as few parts as possible," Hannah says. "The pillows gave this idea of comfort — a nice, soft contrast to hard aluminum." As the shape of the backrest and seat cushion evolved, the designers held unofficial focus groups in their studio on Howard Street. "We realized that people needed somewhere for their sitz bones to go," Hannah explains — hence the placement of the large buttons that hold the cushions in place. Mind you, most people just see this ergonomic detail as part of the chair's charming personality. The product's advertising slogan summed all this up perfectly: "Easy to manufacture, easy to reupholster, easy to live with, and easy to love."

2024

When it came time for a 21st-century tune-up, Knoll's engineers worked with Hannah to achieve a wider range of tilt, introduce a more comfortable foam, and hone a few of the design's angles. At a time when hybrid workers are still seeking WFH furniture that won't clash with their decor, the playful chair feels more relevant than ever. "It isn't intrusive," Hannah says. Still, he believes that there's room for the Morrison Hannah chair in corporate life, too — even for the design's boldest configurations featuring a blue, red or yellow frame and matching cushions. "Lovely, inviting environments are good. So I hope the world says, 'Let's have some fun. Let's buy it in 12 different colours for the office and smile.'"



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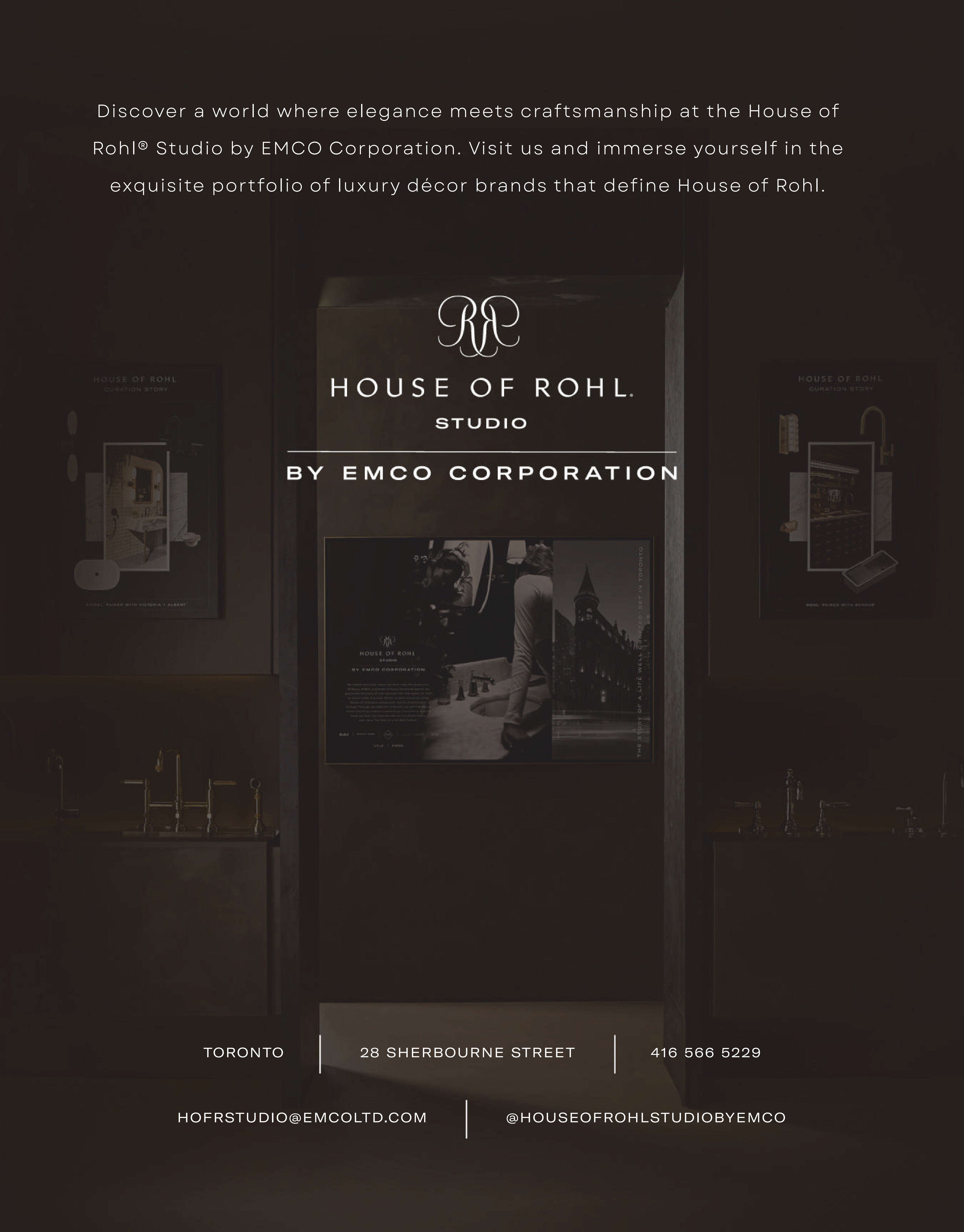
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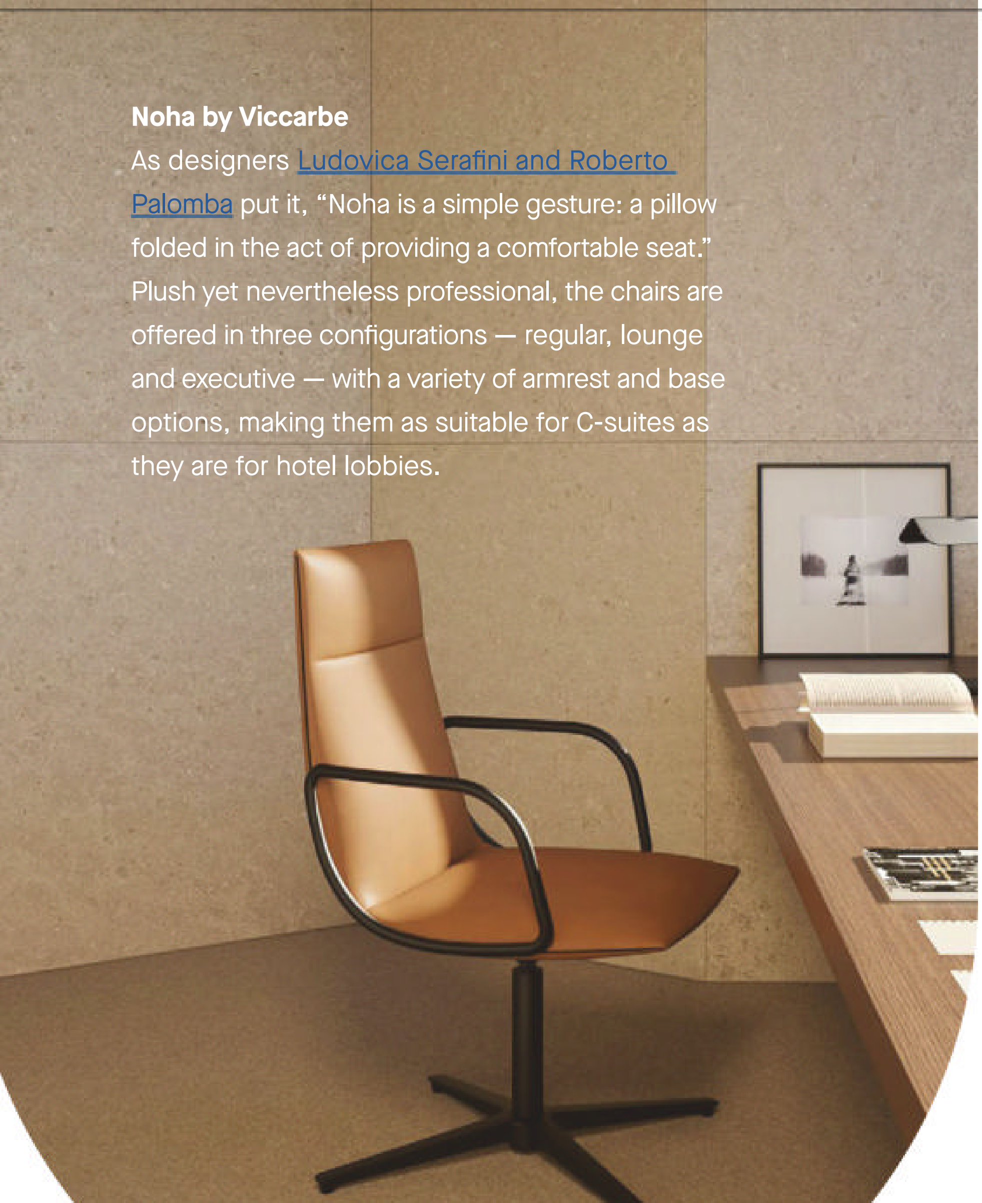
FERIA HÁBITAT

Room by the Sea

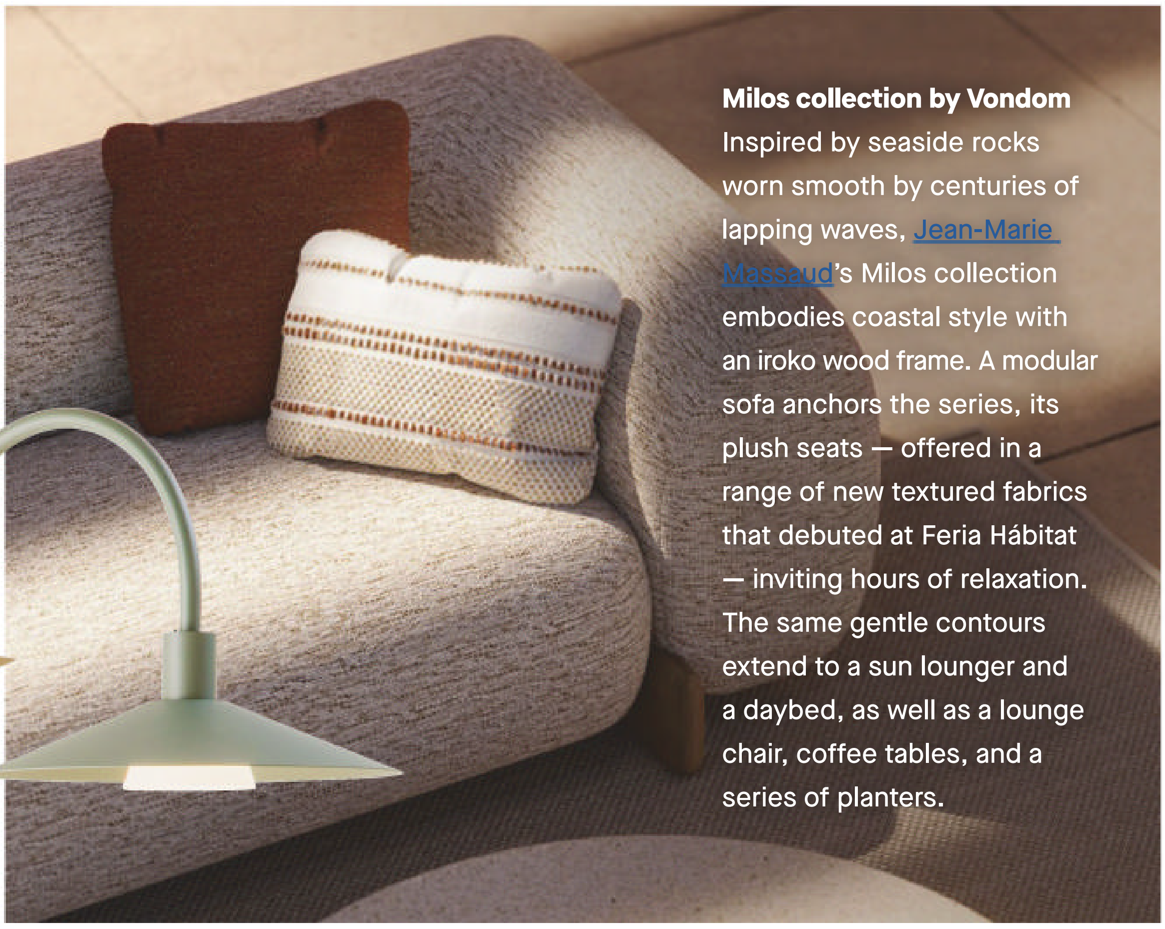
STANDOUTS AT SPAIN'S TOP FURNITURE SHOW
CAPTURED A SERENE MEDITERRANEAN SPIRIT

BY _Stefan Novakovic

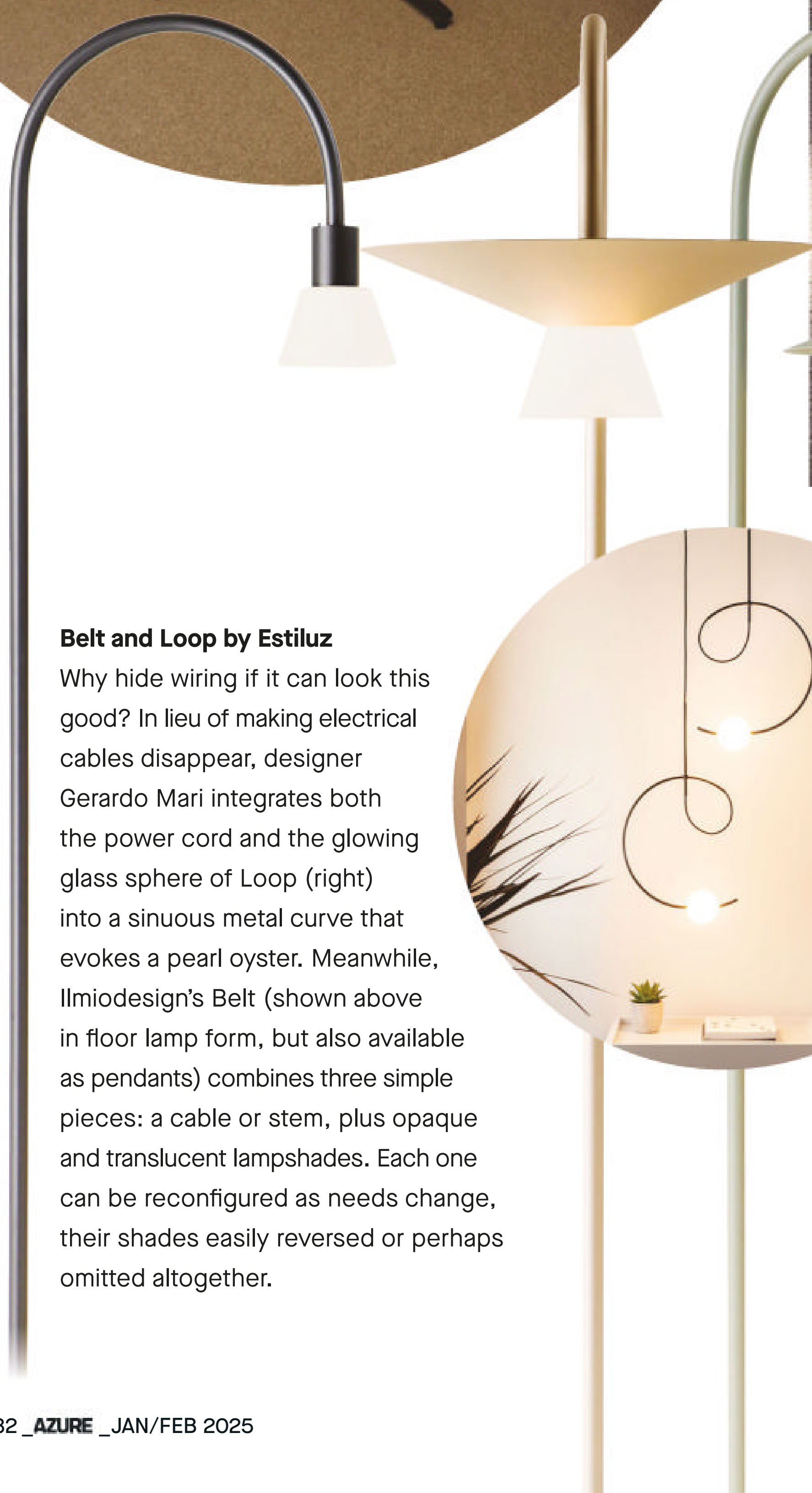
This past September, the vibrant coastal city of Valencia — long a hotbed of Iberian design — welcomed more than 600 brands for the latest edition of Feria Hábitat. Placing Spain's historic yet forward-looking design culture in the global spotlight, the four-day fair reflected its relaxed seaside setting while still placing emphasis on environmental stewardship — a prescient choice, as just a few weeks later, a torrential deluge brought over a year's worth of rainfall to the region in a single devastating day. (The worst of the flooding occurred just south of Valencia.) The calm, sustainable future that Feria Hábitat advocated for can't come soon enough.



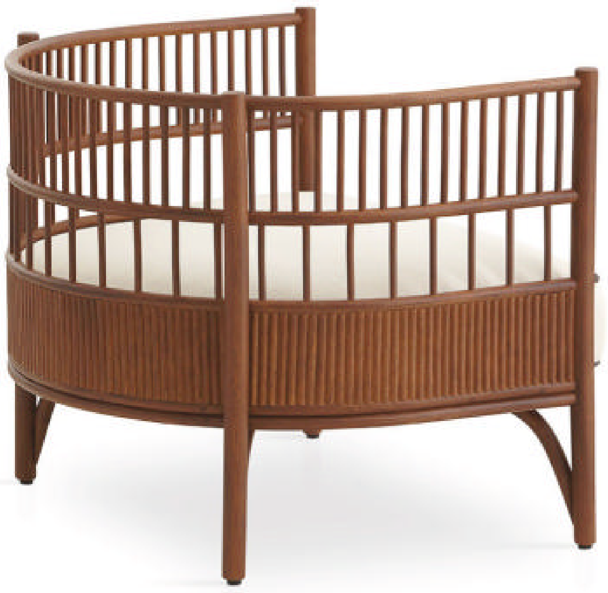
Noha by Viccarbe
As designers Ludovica Serafini and Roberto Palomba put it, "Noha is a simple gesture: a pillow folded in the act of providing a comfortable seat." Plush yet nevertheless professional, the chairs are offered in three configurations — regular, lounge and executive — with a variety of armrest and base options, making them as suitable for C-suites as they are for hotel lobbies.



Milos collection by Vondom
Inspired by seaside rocks worn smooth by centuries of lapping waves, Jean-Marie Massaud's Milos collection embodies coastal style with an iroko wood frame. A modular sofa anchors the series, its plush seats — offered in a range of new textured fabrics that debuted at Feria Hábitat — inviting hours of relaxation. The same gentle contours extend to a sun lounger and a daybed, as well as a lounge chair, coffee tables, and a series of planters.



Belt and Loop by Estiluz
Why hide wiring if it can look this good? In lieu of making electrical cables disappear, designer Gerardo Mari integrates both the power cord and the glowing glass sphere of Loop (right) into a sinuous metal curve that evokes a pearl oyster. Meanwhile, Ilmiodesign's Belt (shown above in floor lamp form, but also available as pendants) combines three simple pieces: a cable or stem, plus opaque and translucent lampshades. Each one can be reconfigured as needs change, their shades easily reversed or perhaps omitted altogether.



Cadenza by Expormim
Spaniard David López Quincoces may have debuted his new collection at Milan's Salone del Mobile, but the seating really stole the show at its homecoming by embodying the indoor–outdoor spirit of Valencian living. Offered as a sofa, loveseat and armchair, Cadenza is distinguished by a delicate yet sturdy — and low-carbon — rounded rattan lattice frame available in a range of finishes and complemented by simple, elegant upholstery.

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Bologna Under Construction

AT CERSAIE 2024, BRANDS PUT CONTEMPORARY SPINS ON CLASSIC DESIGNS

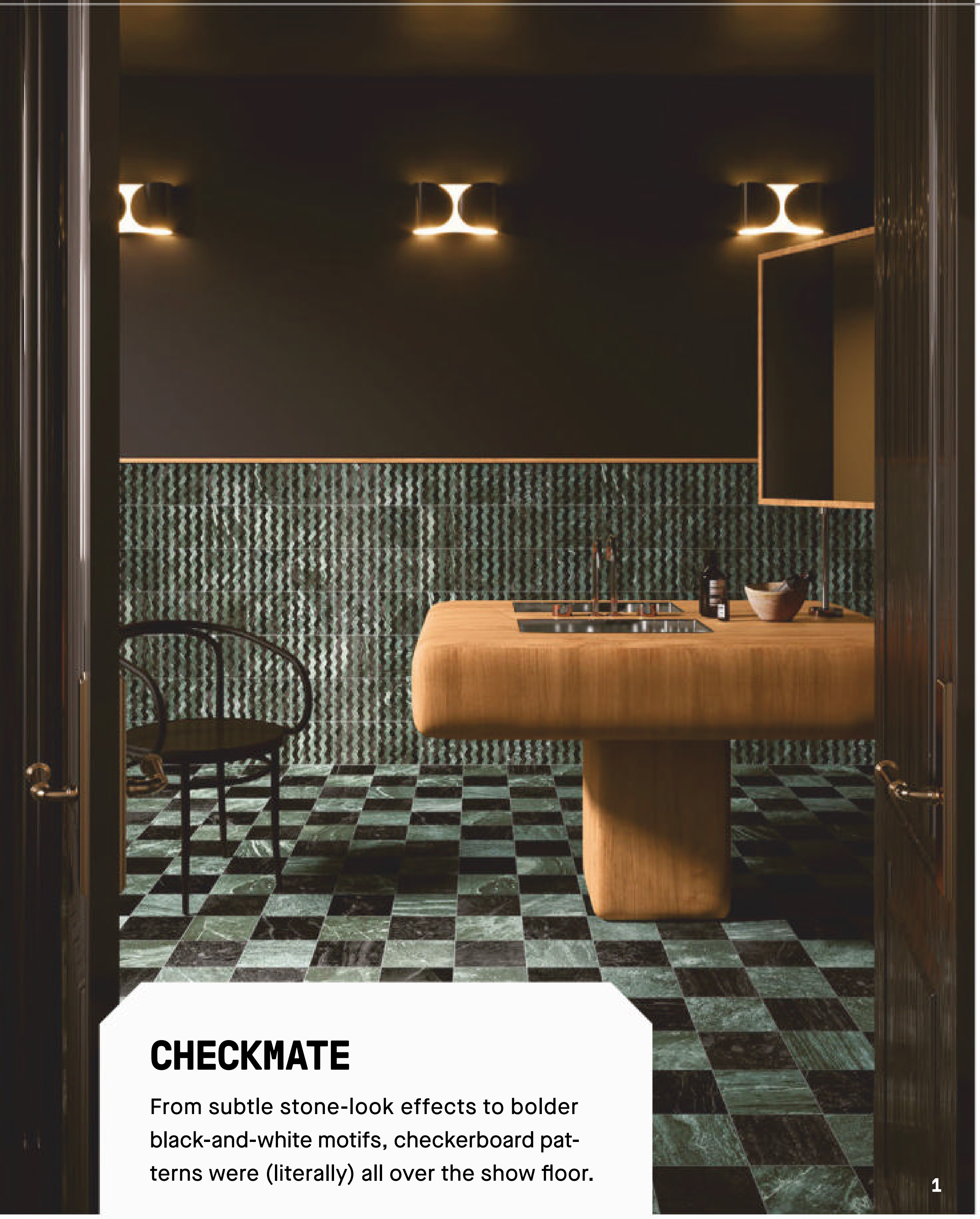
STORY _Sydney Shilling

Visitors returning to Bologna for Cersaie this past September may have noticed that the city looked different than in previous years. With many of the streets closed for construction, the transportation network was riddled with gridlock, bursting at the seams with over 95,000 attendees to the annual tile fair. The temporary traffic will be well worth the payoff: A major project is underway to build two new tram lines, and once they are completed in 2026, one of them will allow for easy access to the airport. In fact, the city is currently leading the transition to zero-emissions public transportation in Europe with the largest fleet of electric buses in Italy, and it plans to introduce electric trolleys down the line.

When you consider that the region of Emilia-Romagna is home to the country’s thriving ceramics industry, a world leader in sustainability, it all starts to make sense. Though it was founded by the Etruscans in 534 BCE, Bologna isn’t resting on its laurels — and neither is the tile industry, which dates back to Roman times. The Italian ceramics association, Confindustria Ceramica, consistently pushes manufacturers to reduce whole-life carbon while advocating for policy changes to implement higher sustainability standards across the larger flooring sector.

And when it comes to design? Tile companies also continue to reinvent themselves. But while slabs have grown increasingly thin and digital printing even more realistic, ultra-trendy styles were fewer and further between this year. Instead, many manufacturers opted to modernize timeless classics like graphic checkerboard patterns and intricate wood inlays. After all, trends may come and go, so to take advantage of the unparalleled durability of ceramics (and thwart the endless cycle of wasteful renovations), they need to be designed with longevity in mind.

The Color collection (shown here in Mud) by Ceramica Fioranese and Alessandro Pasinelli Studio plays with geometry and glossy-matte contrast.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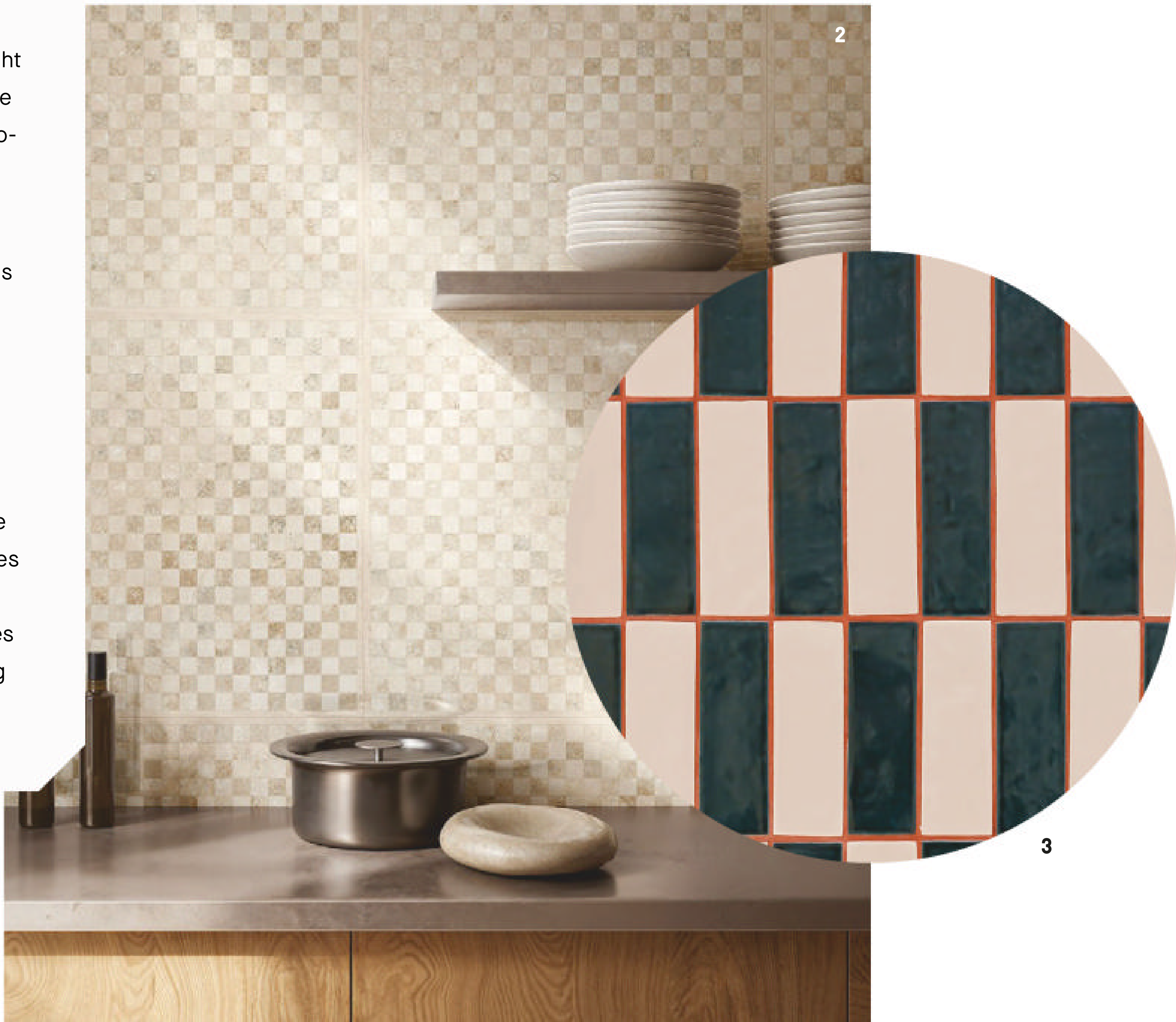
CHECKMATE

From subtle stone-look effects to bolder black-and-white motifs, checkerboard patterns were (literally) all over the show floor.

1 Dandy by 41zero42
With a palette of black, white and green in distressed marble-inspired finishes, 41zero42 sought to evoke the time-worn character of the exclusive Almack's social clubs in London. A variety of geometric patterns enables endless combinations.

2 Invictus Cross by Ceramica Sant'Agostino
Taking the travertine trend in a new direction, this collection (shown here in Mix Warm) alternates the tones of the stone-look surface to create an understated grid pattern.

3 Kimono by Decoratori Bassanesi
Designer Federica Biasi conceived Kimono to highlight the construction of traditional Japanese garments, mirroring the proportions and textures of obi belts. The collection (featured here with contrasting grout) revives colours and techniques from Decoratori Bassanesi's archives, including double firing and shiny enamel glazes.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FEELING THE BLUES

Warm tones have had their time in the sun. Shifting the trend, many of this year's textural tile launches embraced cooler hues.

1 Alabastri by Casalgrande Padana
Several manufacturers moved beyond realism to bring new life to stone-look slabs. This take updates sought-after alabaster in an ethereal powder blue hue that complements its dramatic veining.

2 Poetry Net by ABK
Modelled after fabric fibres like hemp and cotton, this collection by Paola Navone recalls a pair of rain-soaked jeans when rendered in blue. The pattern varies in saturation across each 60-by-120-centimetre tile to create captivating shading effects.

3 Bioterre by Del Conca
Shown here in Stratum Artico, the Bioterre collection references rammed earth construction. Horizontal striations in cool pastel tones mimic the layers of raw clay utilized in the Pisé technique.

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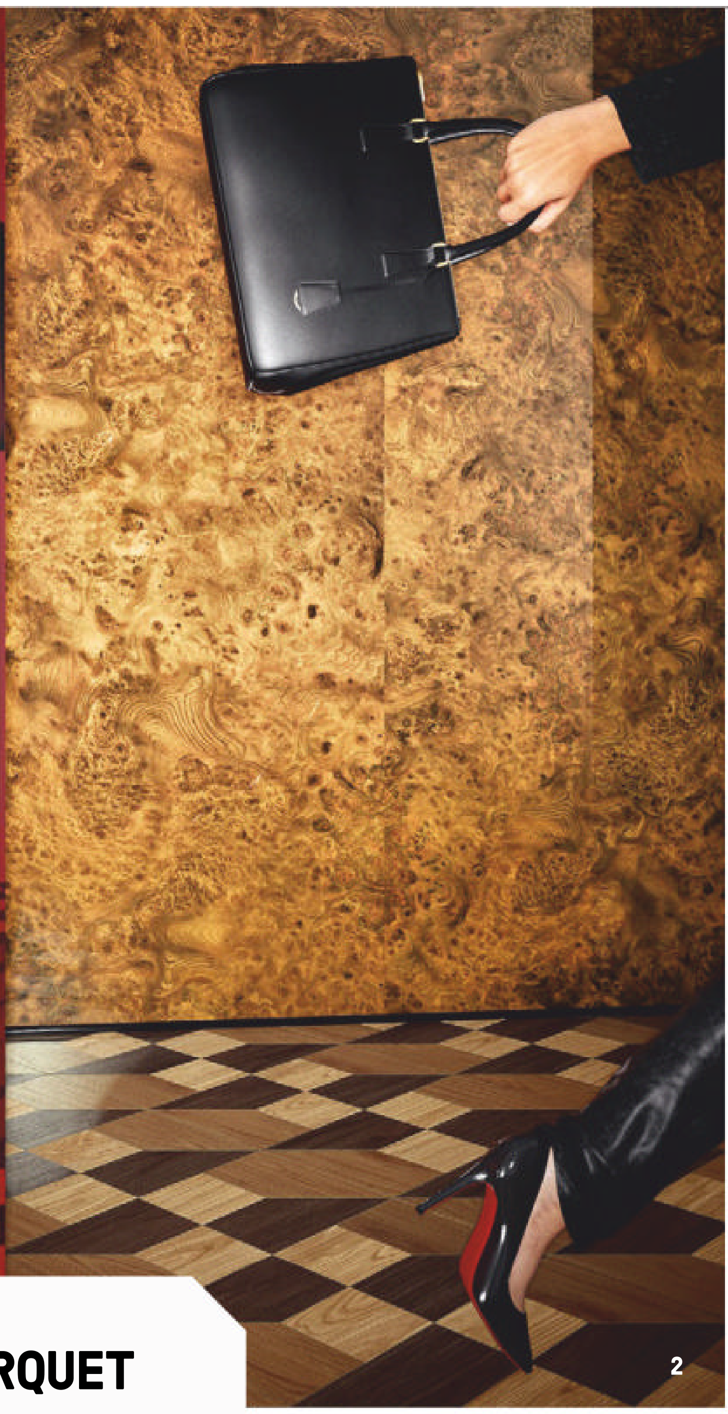

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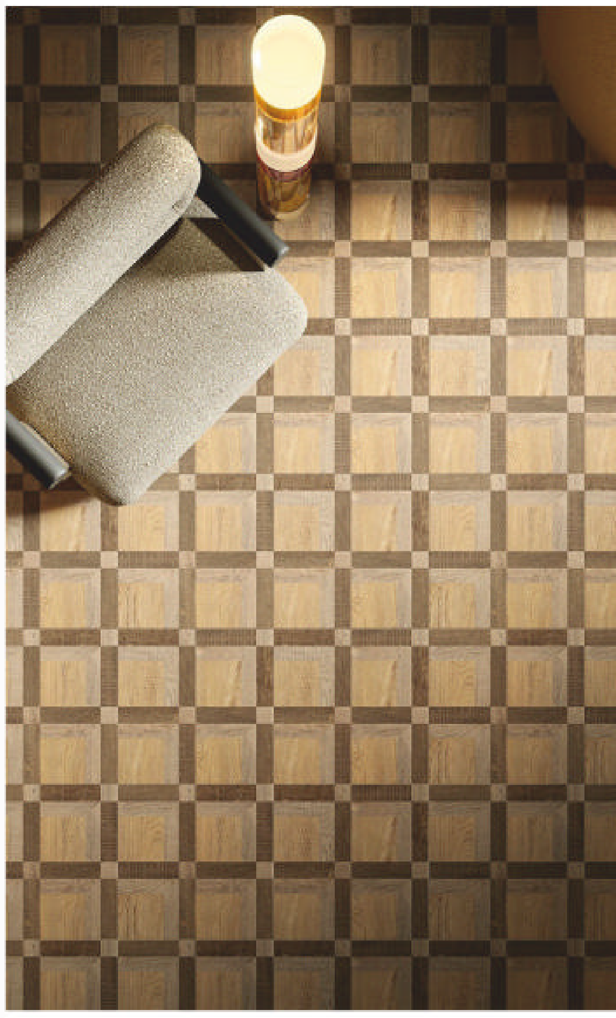
PORCELAIN PARQUET

An alternative to the planks that have dominated in the past, these collections offered decorative riffs on the wood-look style.

1 V Stone by Versace
Palazzo Versace, the brand's Milan design atelier, served as the starting point for this porcelain collection, which balances luxurious stone with the warmth of wood. The four patterns — Frame, Cross, Greca Border and Relief — feel at once modern and classic.

2 Ton by Sodai
Taking cues from ballrooms and gentlemen's clubs, Sodai based this collection on inlaid oak flooring. The geometric pattern, which combines three different shades to create a 3D illusion, pairs perfectly with the retro, burl-wood-inspired panels from the same series.

3 Tabula by Gardenia Orchidea
With all the decorative charm of antique wood-working, Tabula reflects a bygone era. Intricate variations in grain add to the realistic feel, while the P.TECH finish allows for ease of cleaning and slip resistance, for use in commercial and public spaces.



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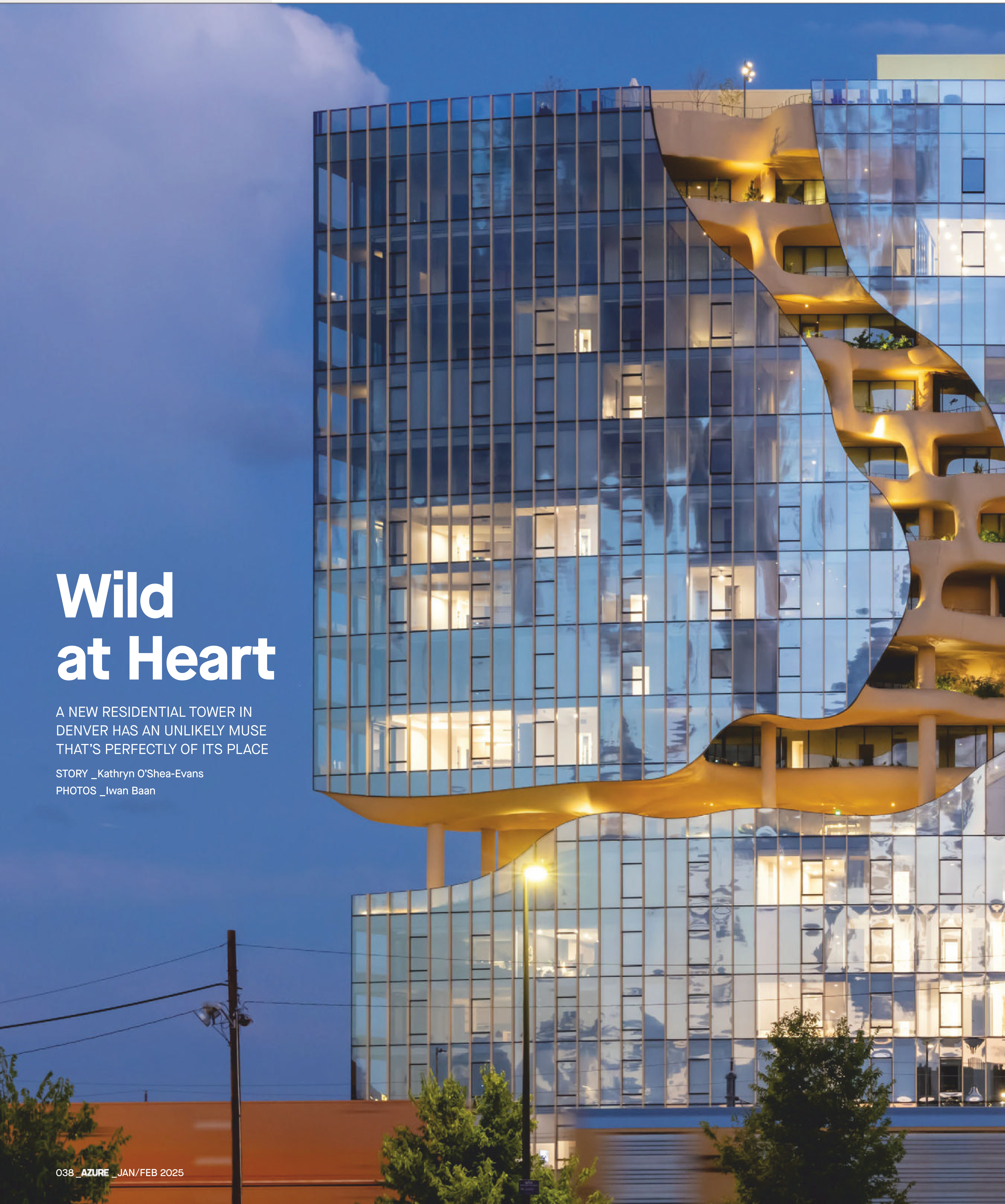
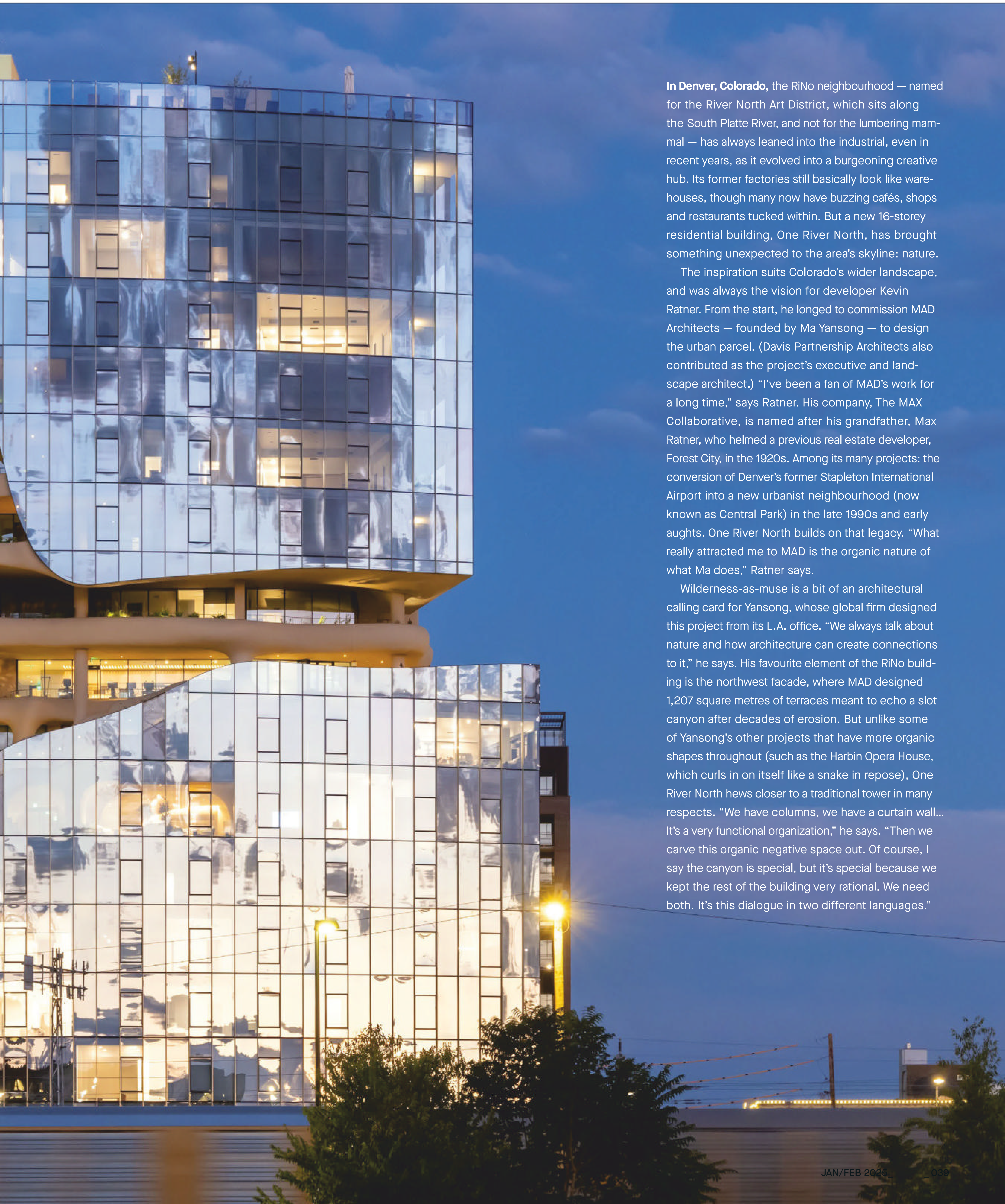


Wild at Heart

A NEW RESIDENTIAL TOWER IN DENVER HAS AN UNLIKELY MUSE THAT'S PERFECTLY OF ITS PLACE

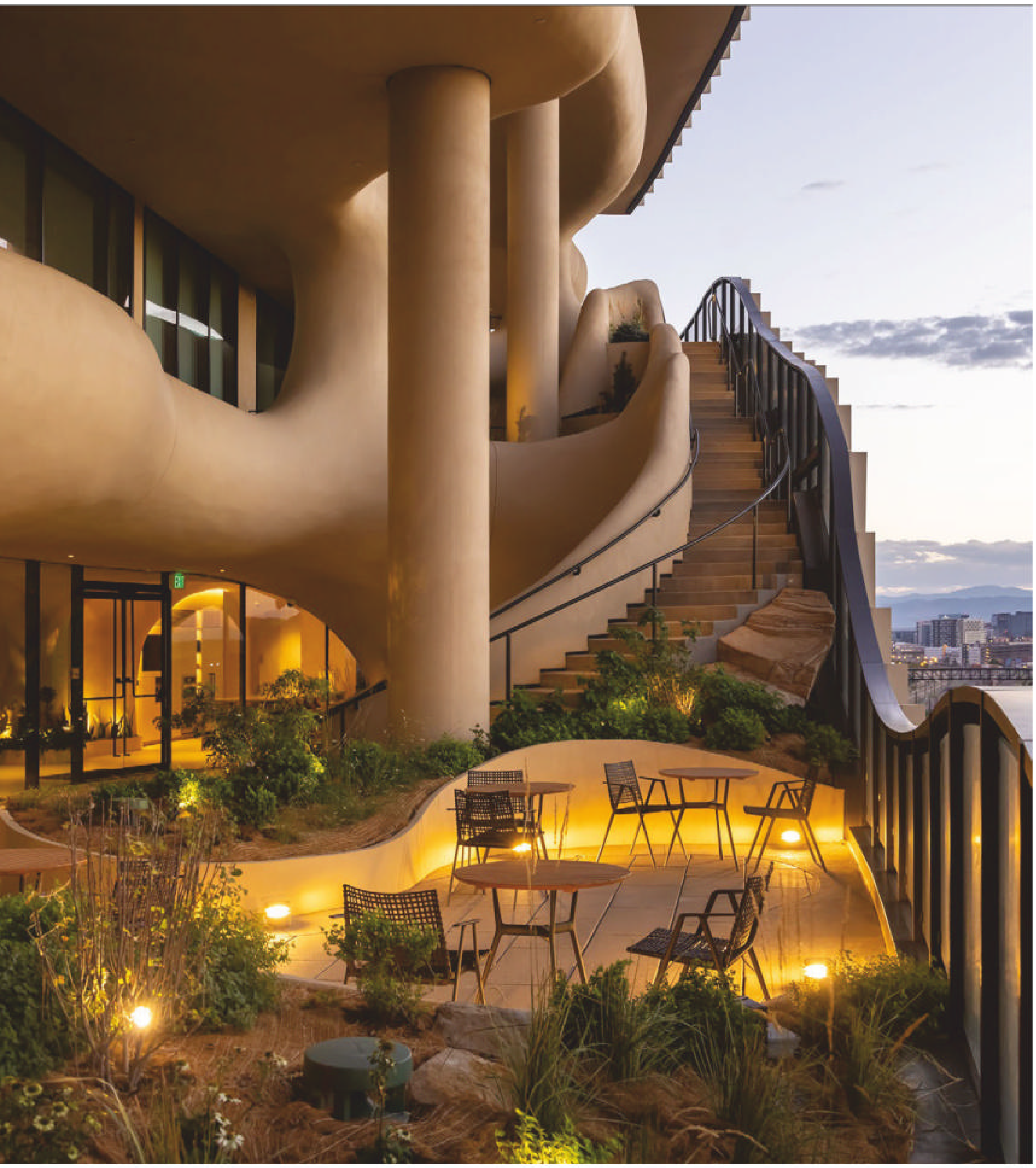
STORY _Kathryn O'Shea-Evans
PHOTOS _Iwan Baan



In Denver, Colorado, the RiNo neighbourhood — named for the River North Art District, which sits along the South Platte River, and not for the lumbering mammal — has always leaned into the industrial, even in recent years, as it evolved into a burgeoning creative hub. Its former factories still basically look like warehouses, though many now have buzzing cafés, shops and restaurants tucked within. But a new 16-storey residential building, One River North, has brought something unexpected to the area's skyline: nature.

The inspiration suits Colorado's wider landscape, and was always the vision for developer Kevin Ratner. From the start, he longed to commission MAD Architects — founded by Ma Yansong — to design the urban parcel. (Davis Partnership Architects also contributed as the project's executive and landscape architect.) "I've been a fan of MAD's work for a long time," says Ratner. His company, The MAX Collaborative, is named after his grandfather, Max Ratner, who helmed a previous real estate developer, Forest City, in the 1920s. Among its many projects: the conversion of Denver's former Stapleton International Airport into a new urbanist neighbourhood (now known as Central Park) in the late 1990s and early aughts. One River North builds on that legacy. "What really attracted me to MAD is the organic nature of what Ma does," Ratner says.

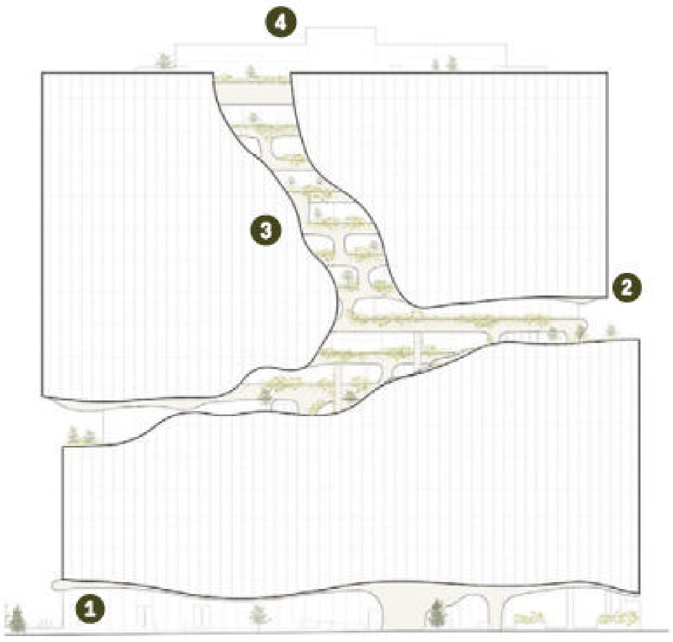
Wilderness-as-muse is a bit of an architectural calling card for Yansong, whose global firm designed this project from its L.A. office. "We always talk about nature and how architecture can create connections to it," he says. His favourite element of the RiNo building is the northwest facade, where MAD designed 1,207 square metres of terraces meant to echo a slot canyon after decades of erosion. But unlike some of Yansong's other projects that have more organic shapes throughout (such as the Harbin Opera House, which curls in on itself like a snake in repose), One River North hews closer to a traditional tower in many respects. "We have columns, we have a curtain wall... It's a very functional organization," he says. "Then we carve this organic negative space out. Of course, I say the canyon is special, but it's special because we kept the rest of the building very rational. We need both. It's this dialogue in two different languages."



To create the canyon's exterior, MAD considered materials like glass fibre reinforced concrete but eventually landed on plaster (applied here atop a substrate of rebar and mesh). "It's more often used in theme parks," explains Jon Kontuly, the firm's project director. The contractor, KHS&S, took the design model and tessellated it into a series of blocks each measuring roughly two cubic metres, allowing the pieces to be easily moved on site by just a pair of workers. The blocks were then fastened to the structural slab and joined together like the squares of a massive quilt. "Everything is basically automated, and that's how we're able to get a very good fidelity between our design and the finished product," Kontuly says. The outcome allows people to feel enveloped in the space. "With other material options, you'd have a lot more joints. We really wanted people to be transported to nature."

While the building's 187 rental units are set up like standard apartments, a lucky few boast spectacular sightlines through the organic shape of the canyon wall and to the mountains beyond. Wellness options also abound on the premises, including a 650-square-metre rooftop with a pool, spa and garden. In one of the retail spaces on the ground floor, a health club, Beem, will offer light therapy treatments and an infrared sauna.

"People know this is architecture — this is not a fake natural space," Yansong says. "But the spiritual quality of that space can still remind people in general that they're part of nature. The human body is a part of nature." And now, flora and fauna have moved in — no lease required. "I was there the other day, and it was very exciting because the plants are actually growing in, and I saw that there were ladybugs and praying mantis," says Kontuly. "With the plants and the insects and everything, it becomes alive."



BLAZING A TRAIL

One River North's vertical landscape (by Davis Partnership Architects) draws from Colorado's various biomes. Here are the environments that inspired each level of the building's canyon, plus a few plants you can expect to find in each.

❶ FLOOR 1

The Foothills

A semi-arid grassland with plantings typical of the Denver metro area

❷ FLOORS 6–9

The Trail

A semi-arid shrubland area defined by native grasses, currant and sandcherry — plus a cascading water feature

❸ FLOORS 10–16

The Canyon

A pinyon–juniper woodland zone filled with creeping mahonia, sumac and leadplant

❹ ROOFTOP

The Alpine Meadow

A subalpine forest region featuring clumping groups of pine trees, sedum groundcover and perennial flowers

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EDITOR _Kendra Jackson

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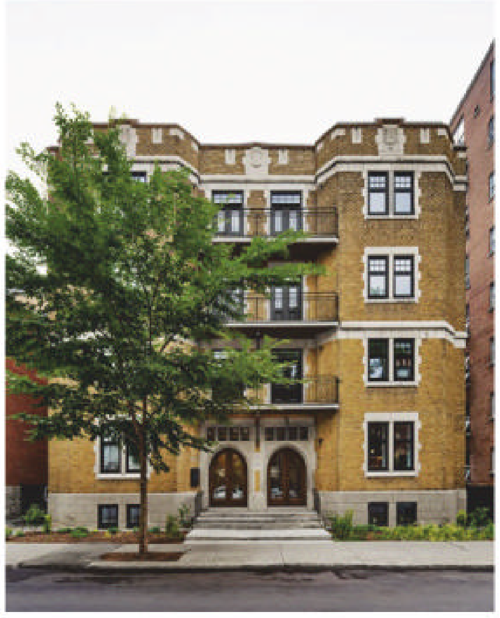
Modern Amenities

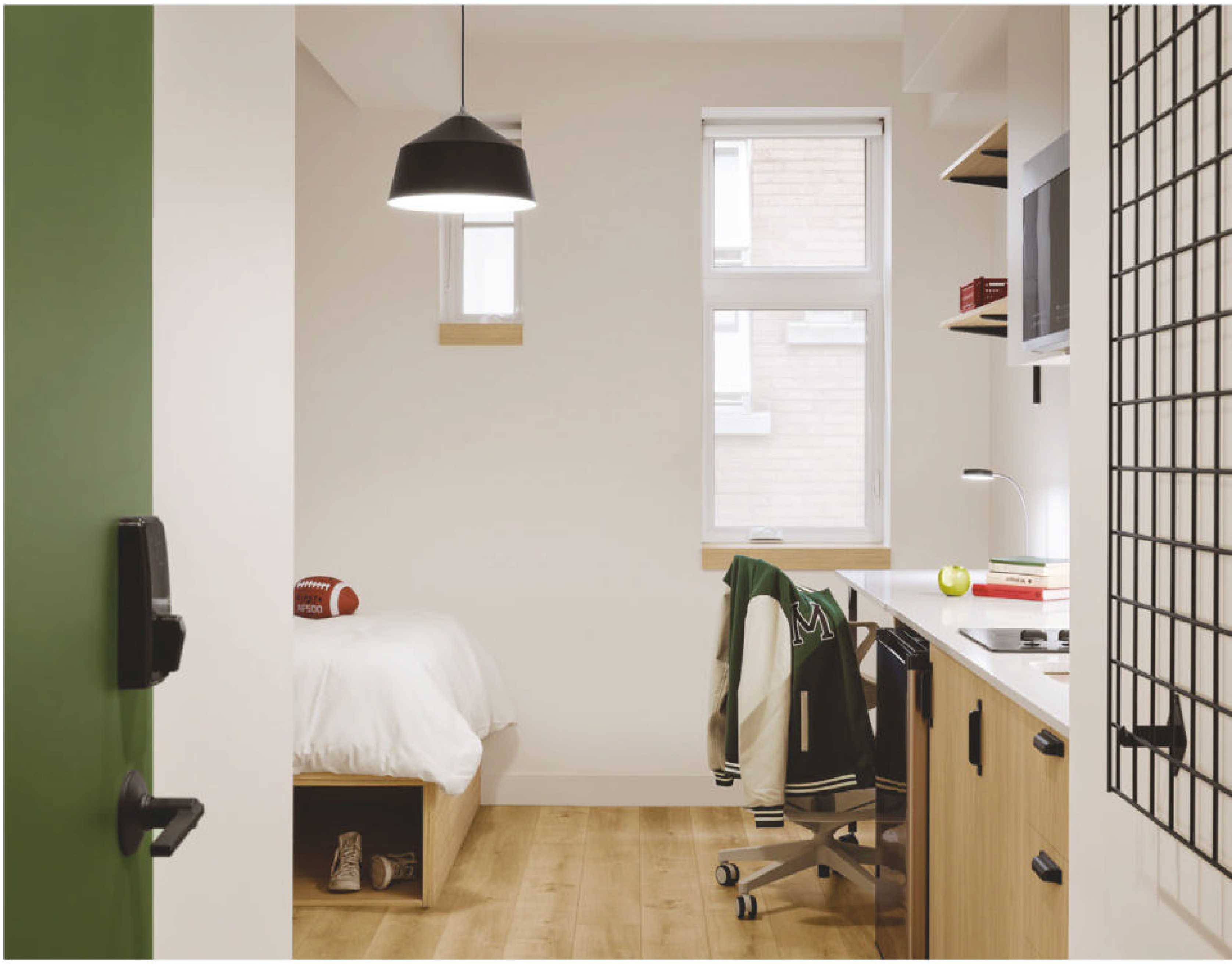
IN MONTREAL, LE WITHIN STUDENT DORMS BY SID LEE ARCHITECTURE MAKE THE MOST OF MODULARITY

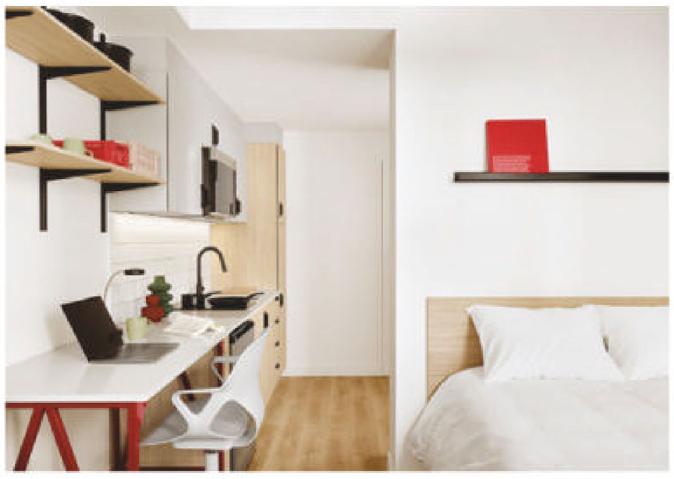
STORY _Sophie Sobol
PHOTOS _Alex Lesage

OPPOSITE: It should come as no surprise that Le Within boasts such a clear colour story — coming as it does from an architecture firm with strong ties to graphic design — or that all the signage and brand identity were also expertly realized by the team at Sid Lee.

BELOW: Behind the historic facade of the Shaughnessy Village building, Le Within offers students an all-inclusive and connected way of life.







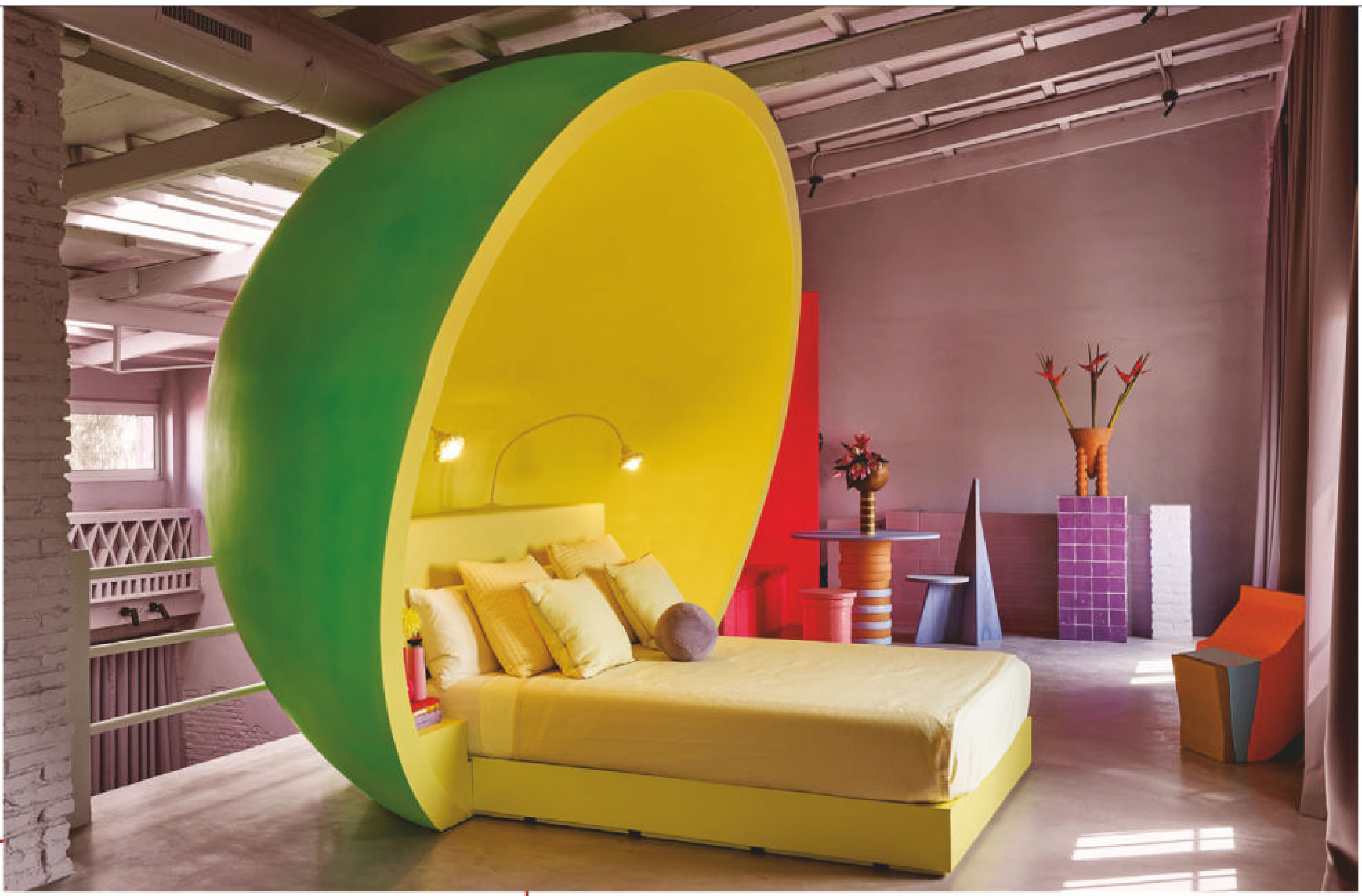
ABOVE AND TOP RIGHT: Far from the cramped and uninspiring dorms of the past, the student lofts are considered and adaptable to support a variety of individual needs. Custom furnishings — like the beds, desks and kitchen cabinets — are sleek and durable, while matte black Ginestra 300 pendants from Astro add graphic punctuation.

When they first enter their dormitory bedrooms, fledgling university students often have low expectations. While it may be their first taste of freedom — a new home away from home — too many tales of cramped, cell-like spaces and roommate horror stories tend to quell any confidence that their experience will be different. Enter Le Within. Led by Sid Lee Architecture and Canora Real Estate Agency, the student-housing project in Montreal reimagines a common reality: adaptable interiors that support everyday needs while inspiring personal and academic growth.

Located in a historic Shaughnessy Village building, the student lofts are defined by four design pillars: duality, immersion, urbanity and modularity. The scheme explores contrast through rich colours and textured materials, while frame-within-a-frame interior compositions and the repetition of certain elements create a visual connection between the various functions of the residence. To link the 1926 building's heritage roots to its modern-day urban sensibility, Sid Lee Architecture devised a considered palette that includes bold red (a nod to the brick-clad homes typical of the Milton-Parc neighbourhood) and deep green (the nearby verdant Mont Royal) — even hits of salmon and cream point to the toppings of the city's famous bagels. "Le Within reflects the idea of a microcosm mirroring its surroundings, inviting students to find inspiration, comfort, and a sense of belonging within the residence. It is an encounter with the city within its own walls," says Marie-Elaine Benoit, executive design director at Sid Lee.

But more than anything, Le Within champions modularity. Two room types are available (private lofts and three- or four-bedroom co-living apartments), and both offer versatile storage and surfaces optimized for functionality. The kitchen counter can be used for meal prep, and when it's time to study, it doubles as a workstation. Generous cubbies built into the single beds' planked oak laminate frames and open shelving throughout help keep things organized and within arm's reach. "Le Within addresses evolving student needs by focusing on well-being, community and adaptability, and fosters social connectivity through versatile communal spaces," explains Jean Pelland, architect and principal partner at Sid Lee Architecture.

Student housing projects like Le Within are refreshing, and they signal that it is finally time to abandon the old, unyielding dorm model for something more modern — and to dispel those prison cell comparisons once and for all. az



LEFT: Exemplifying Masquespacio's signature blend of maximalism and whimsy, the upper-level bedroom combines vivid tones of lime green and acid yellow with robust geometric forms.

BELOW: While open to the internal courtyard below, the bedroom maintains a sense of privacy through the large-scale volumes that conceal a custom bed and meditation area.

Personal Space

THE DUO BEHIND MASQUESPACIO STUDIO MAKES AN EXUBERANT BEDROOM FOR THEIR OWN HOME

STORY _Jaclyn Tersigni PHOTOS _Luís Beltrán

Experiential, thoroughly modern hospitality spaces are a trademark of Spanish design firm Masquespacio. But when founders Ana Milena Hernández Palacios and Christophe Penasse set out to purchase a property for their hybrid home–office, they eschewed contemporary quarters in Valencia's city centre in favour of the historic houses found in the surrounding countryside, eventually settling on a 1920s farmhouse turned villa with original features that hadn't been erased by past renovations.

While Hernández Palacios and Penasse were committed to maintaining the essence of the home's character — glimpses of which can be seen in the original brick walls, modernist hydraulic tile floors, and latticework — the end result is a maximalist reimagining. "The design of the house is a clear representation of our evolution as designers," Penasse says. "That's why you find some deco, some futuristic elements, some New Memphis, but also graphical forms."

The home is also a case study of geometric shapes, variegated textures and colour-washed surfaces. For their ground-floor office spaces, the two splashed each room with a bold hue to create definition, demolished portions of existing plaster on the walls to reveal the brickwork and layered curtains of different colours to build dimension and warmth. Sculptural furniture and ceramics from the firm's own Mas Creations collections further establish a sense of modernity, contrasting with the original decorative flooring.

Nowhere is that more evident than upstairs, in the couple's bedroom. Partially overlooking a double-height interior courtyard, the sleeping space is defined by two massive forms: a cylindrical magenta screen and a neon-green sphere. The screen wraps around a built-in bench and, along with Mas Creations' whimsical table and chairs, constitutes the couple's meditation area. To the right of this, the sphere — actually a 3D-fabricated dome made from foam and covered with microcement — encases the acid-yellow bed, concealing it from the courtyard to create a sense of disconnection. The playful effect of the oversized fluorescent volumes is softened by microcement floors and contrasted by the industrial character of the exposed beams, ductwork and brick walls, all painted a shade of lilac that's an extension of the lower courtyard.

The bedroom also contains a sitting area with a television tucked behind floor-to-ceiling curtains, and additional convention-busting furniture and eclectic objects from Mas Creations. A triangle cut-out in the wall serves as the entrance to the closet. There are no partitions to divide the sleeping quarters from the rest of the upper-level living space; instead, they're linked by a long corridor that also contains the bathroom, an all-yellow, mosaic-clad space. Despite the small footprint, the designers managed to incorporate another geometric element to maintain a connection to the rest of the home: a vanity in the shape of an inverted triangle. az

RIGHT: Furniture pieces from Mas Creations, the product arm of Masquespacio, include a triangular chair and a terracotta and ceramic ringed table base.

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IN TOLENTINO, ITALY, ORA STUDIO LEADS THE TRANSFORMATION OF A HISTORIC VILLA INTO A GRANDE DAME OF DESIGN

STORY _Kendra Jackson

There are well-designed hotels, and then there is Interno Marche in Tolentino, Italy. Taking up residency in the fully renovated Villa Gabrielli — home to the factories of leather goods fashion label Nazareno Gabrielli for six decades before becoming the headquarters of Poltrona Frau — the recently opened hospitality venue is the vision of Franco Moschini and pays homage to 60 years of design history.

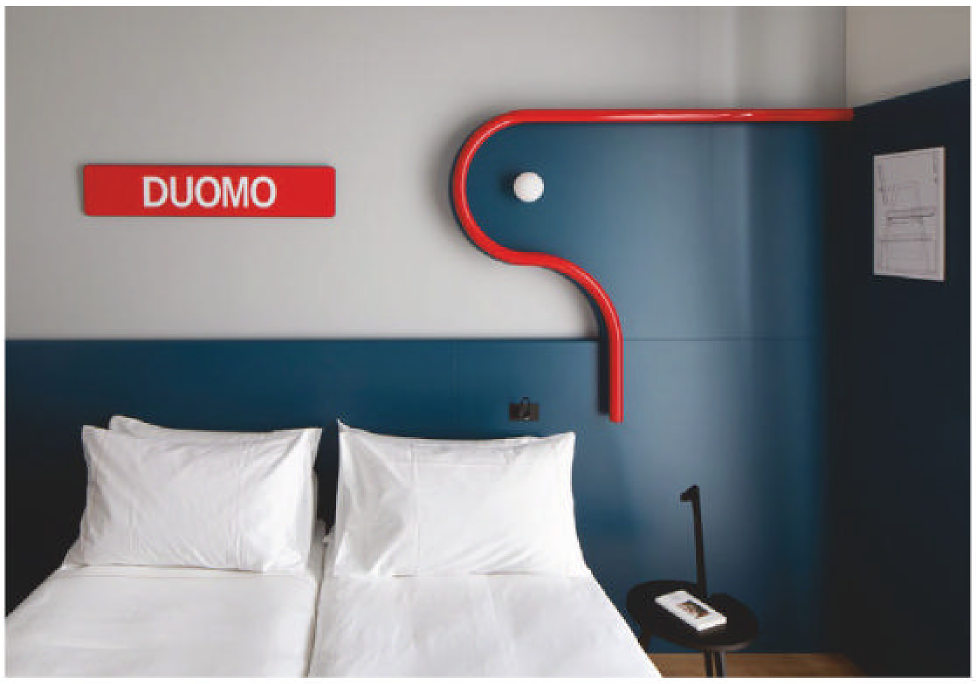
A heartfelt patron of Italian design and past owner of Poltrona Frau (who also lived in the villa at one time), Moschini called on Claudio Tombolini and Cristiana Antonini of ORA Studio (which they co-founded with Michele Bonfigli and Federico Pisani) to lead the interior overhaul of the entire 3,600-square-metre century-old art nouveau building, including the lobby, restaurant, spa and guest rooms; the local firm orchestrated a team of more than 2,000 professionals that were involved over three years of construction to bring Moschini's dream to life. Now featuring 25 rooms dedicated to 25 iconic Italian and international designers — chosen by Moschini — along with five long-stay suites that reference as many movements (arts and crafts, Vienna Secession, radical, pop and modernism), Interno Marche is appointed with 400 monumental furniture pieces, lighting fixtures and artworks by industry darlings like Gio Ponti, Nendo, Vico Magistretti and Achille Castiglioni. Before officially opening to the public, the hotel hosted a few special events to give locals a sneak peek of the revitalization. "Seeing older people who used to work in the building crying and moved to see the old beauty brought back to life was very touching for us," says Tombolini, who led some tour groups with Antonini. "We were happy and proud to see that different generations sincerely like the project."

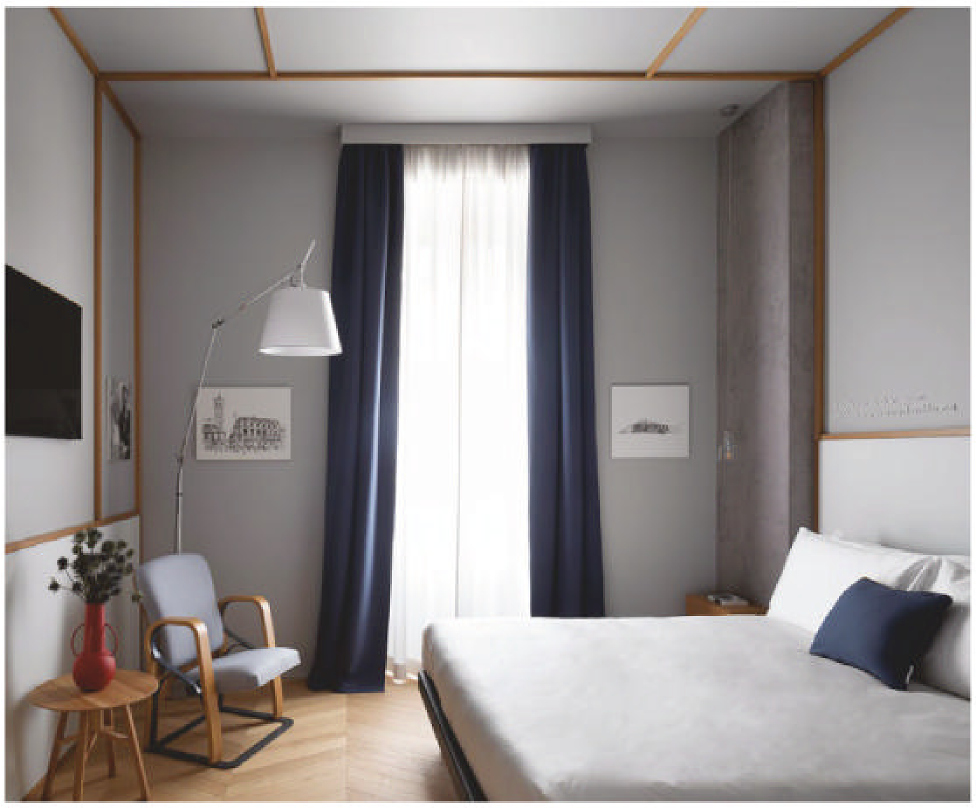
Here, we look at four of our favourite rooms.

PHOTOS BY COSÈ MANUEL ROSSI + GERMAN BOURGEAT (ANASTASSIADES, ALBINI AND CERRI); SERENA ELLER (DE LUCCHI)

← ANASTASSIADES, ROOM 202

When bringing the Liberty-era villa (the Italian version of art nouveau) into its modern incarnation, a number of original frescoes were revealed, including in the room dedicated to Cyprus-born lighting design maestro Michael Anastassiades. Now painstakingly resurrected, the ornate mural makes for a stunning contrast to the deep blue–painted metal sheet that backs the bed — a unique finish that effects a "mixture of material surface and light reflection," notes Tombolini — and the sleek Kerakoll resin floor. Delicate pendants from the IC Lights collection by Anastassiades for Flos are suspended above the bed, while his sinuous bent beechwood N. 200 lounge chair for Gebrüder Thonet Vienna and matte-finished Verde Guatemala marble Love Me, Love Me Not table for Salvatori create a cozy corner. The custom artwork is by graphic designer Emilio Antinori and was inspired by other lighting series by the London-based Anastassiades.



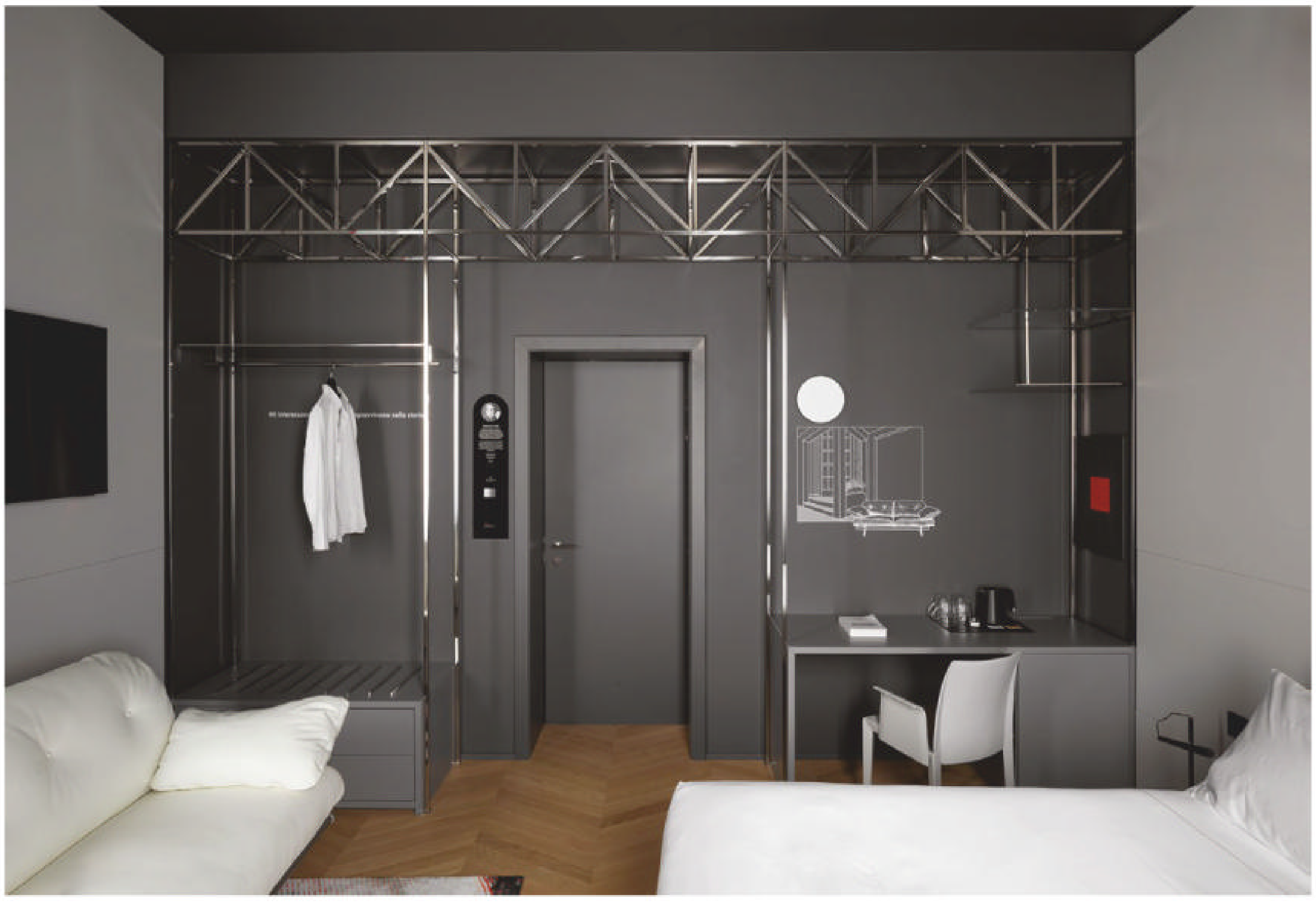


← ALBINI, ROOM G 01

Celebrating the Italian neo-rationalist architect Franco Albini, this room features a serpentine red metal tube detail that directly nods to the handrails he designed for Milan's metro stations during the 1960s. The shocks of red in the tube (which wraps around a Glo-Ball wall sconce from Flos) and the Duomo signage are set off by a sophisticated palette of blue and grey; elsewhere, white metal tubing frames walls, doorways and a built-in desk. Albini's minimalist yet playful Cicognino table for Cassina sits bedside, and his Tre Pezzi wingback (also Cassina) in poppy red upholstery greets guests at the door (not shown).

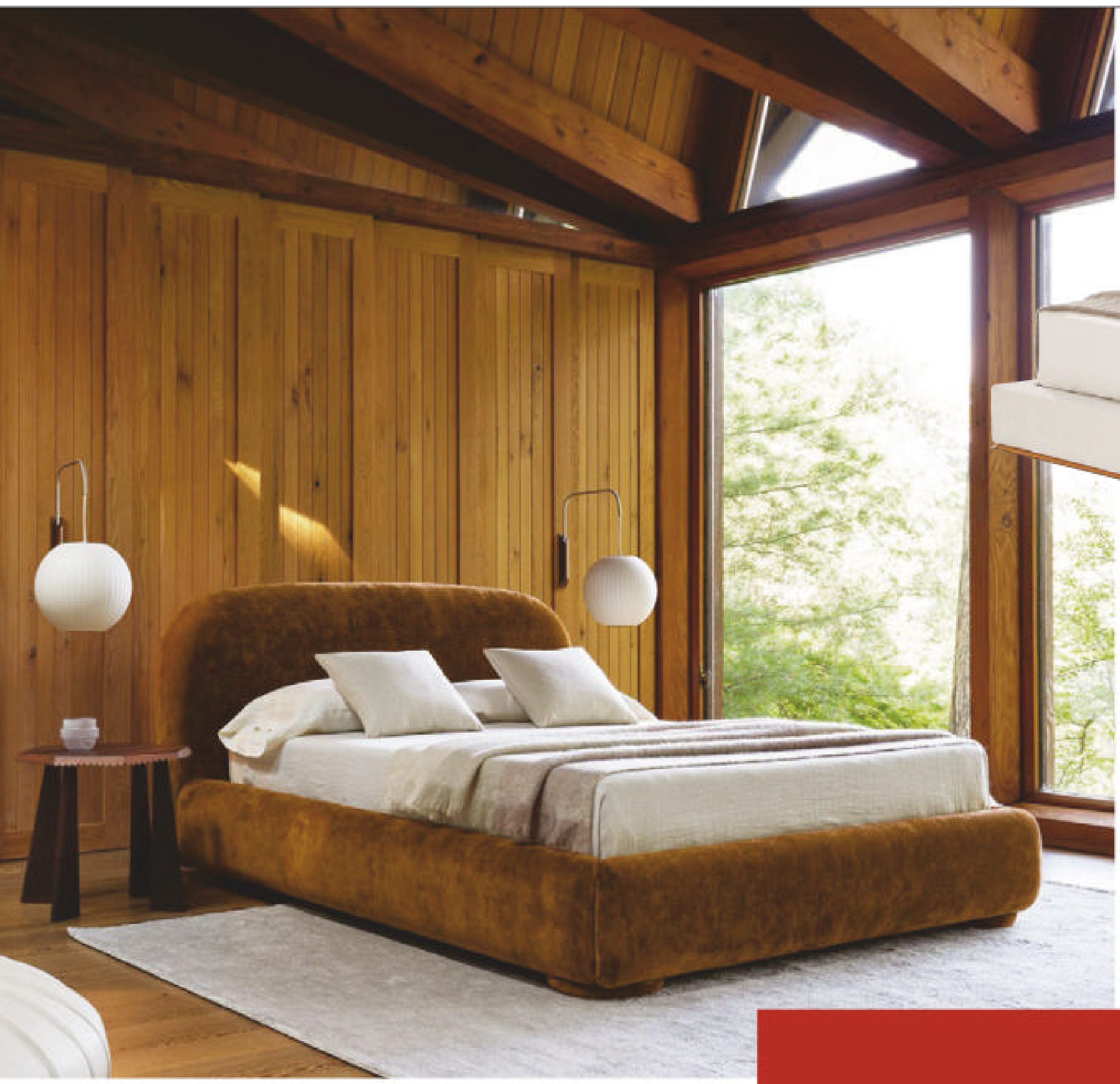
← DE LUCCHI, ROOM 104

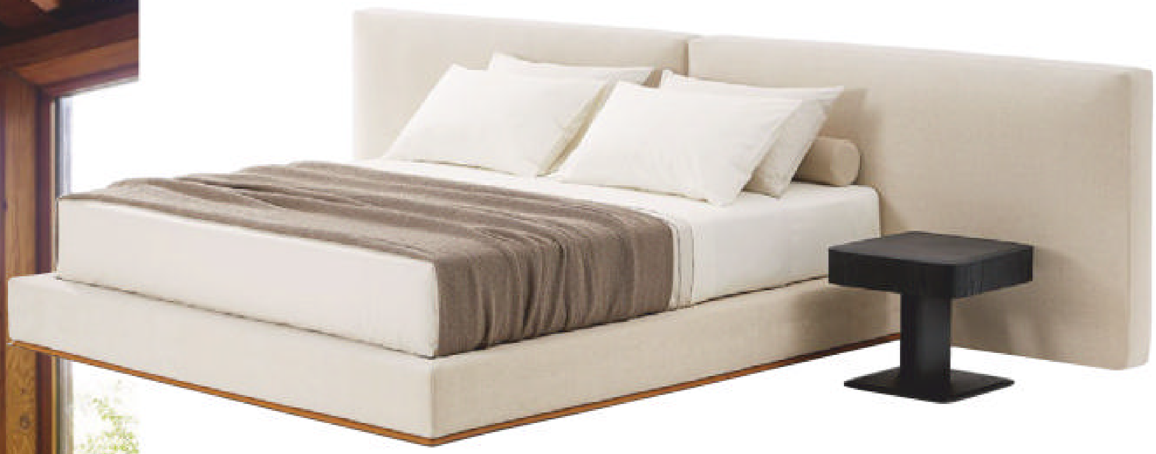
A pivotal player in multiple radical design movements (and a personal friend of Moschini), Michele De Lucchi is known for his clean, simple lines, affinity for natural wood and responsible waste-free approach. This shines through in his namesake room, which features an abstract layout of wood strips on the plaster walls and ceiling and a pervading sense of warmth. Responsible for the refurbishment of the nearby Politeama Theatre (built in 1926), De Lucchi founded the experimental studio Produzione Privata in 1990, for which he developed the Benedetto table (shown) with Davide Angeli; his iconic Tolomeo floor lamp from Artemide stands in the corner behind an archival Gebrüder Thonet Vienna theatre chair.



← CERRI, ROOM 106

Visually arresting, precise and rational, the scaffolding-like structure in the room devoted to architect and graphic designer Pierluigi Cerri was inspired by the visionary's rigorous approach; ORA Studio also celebrates industrial metal as a functional element with this architectural installation. The chevron floor found here and in other rooms adds a layer of age-appropriate warmth to the historic building, while the two-tone grey walls and Cerri-designed furniture — namely, his brutalist Ouverture sofa at the foot of the bed and (now discontinued) Lola armchair at the desk, both from Poltrona Frau — are contemporary counterpoints. Elsewhere in the room, mirrors, textured glass and a restrained use of colour (primarily red) effectively showcase the evergreen appeal of the polymath's creative output.





BRERA
Expressing contemporary elegance through a strong horizontal design, the Brera bed, by architect Jean-Marie Massaud for **Poliform**, makes for a serene destination within the domestic landscape. A tailored leather-clad base supports the upholstered bed frame and expansive headboard, both of which are available in a variety of tactile fabrics and rich leathers. The bed (and two new coordinating bedside tables) is a nighttime complement to an existing sofa system collection with impressive architectural undertones.

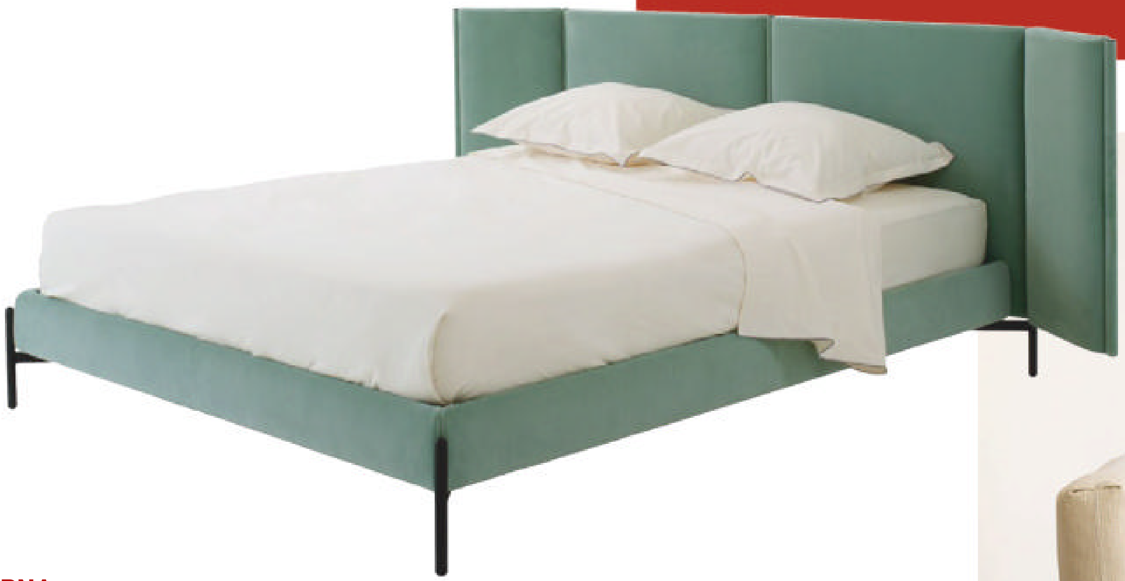
Sweet Dreams

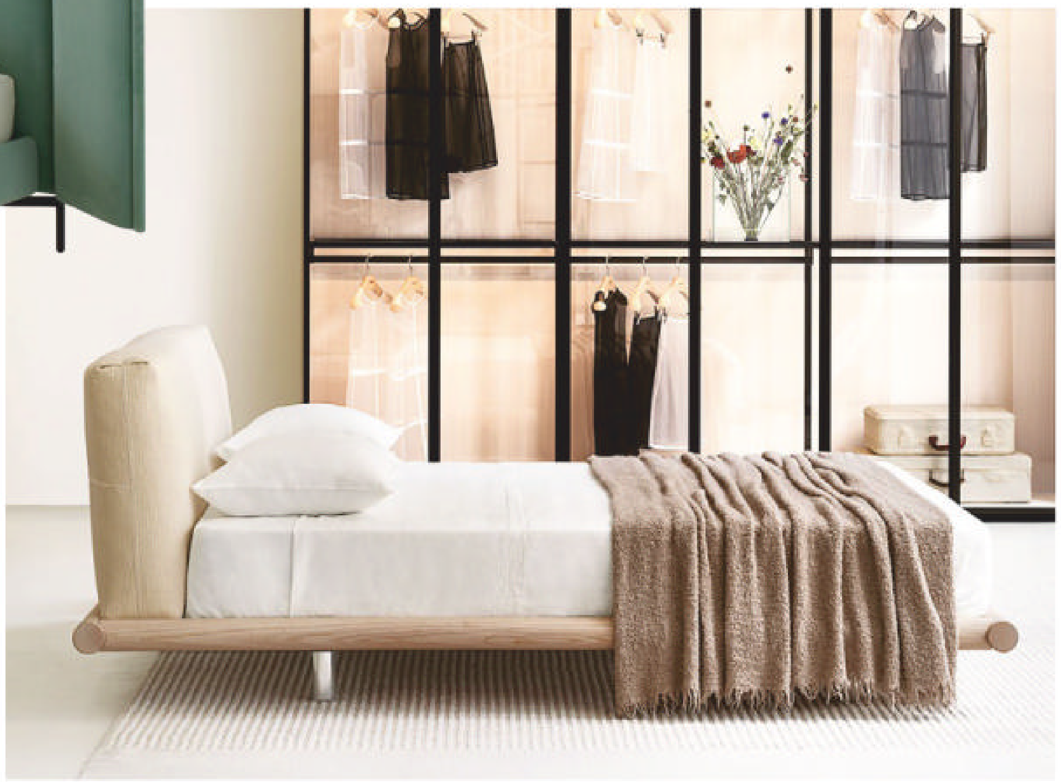
FOUR SUPER-COMFORTABLE UPHOLSTERED BEDS THAT ENCOURAGE AN EARLY NIGHT

BY _Kendra Jackson

LULL
Tapping into the free-spirited attitude of 1970s surf culture, Australia's Ellison Studios describes its Lull bed for **Design Within Reach** as "the moment of calm between swells." With a low-slung profile and plush cloud-like frame, the fully upholstered bed feels both contemporary and nostalgic, playing with texture right down to its fabric-covered disc-shaped feet. A range of upholstery options is available, including Sandon, Ellison's own sustainable velvet-like material made from recycled plastic bottles (shown here in Burnt Butter).

IRO
Copenhagen-based GamFratesi references both Swiss Alpine chalets and intricate Japanese joinery techniques with its Iro bed for **Porro**: Four hefty ash-wood poles are fastened together with finely crafted corner joints, creating a substantial frame for the two large upholstered headboard cushions (in multiple fabric, eco-leather or leather options); four columnar feet lift the platform off the ground, adding a sense of overall lightness. The turned-wood structural elements can be tinted one of five nature-inspired colours.





HYPNA
Conceived by Nada Nasrallah and Christian Horner of Vienna-based Soda Designers, the Hypna bed from **Ligne Roset** is backed by a movable *paravent* (or screen) that can be opened to make space for a bedside table or closed to create a more intimate sleeping environment. Vertical metal tubes wrapped in the same fabric as the headboard accommodate the movement of the screen and accentuate the detail in a formal way. Single wing (left or right) versions are also available, as is one without any wings.

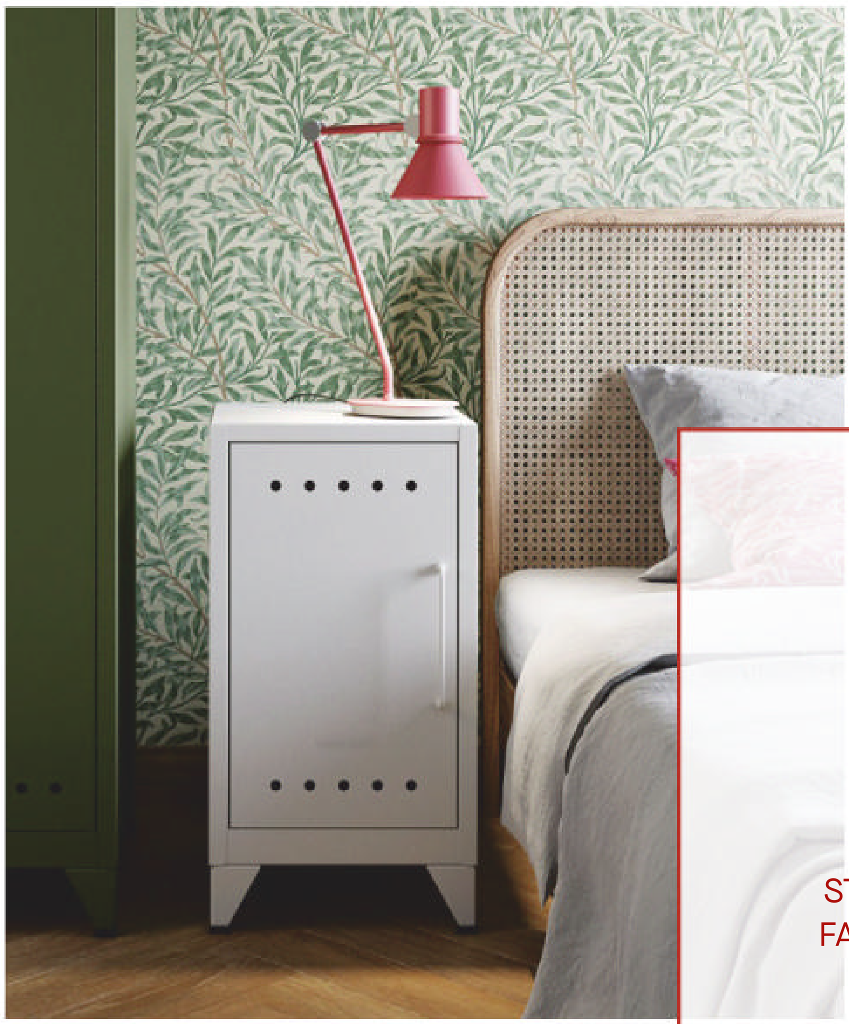
Bunk Mates

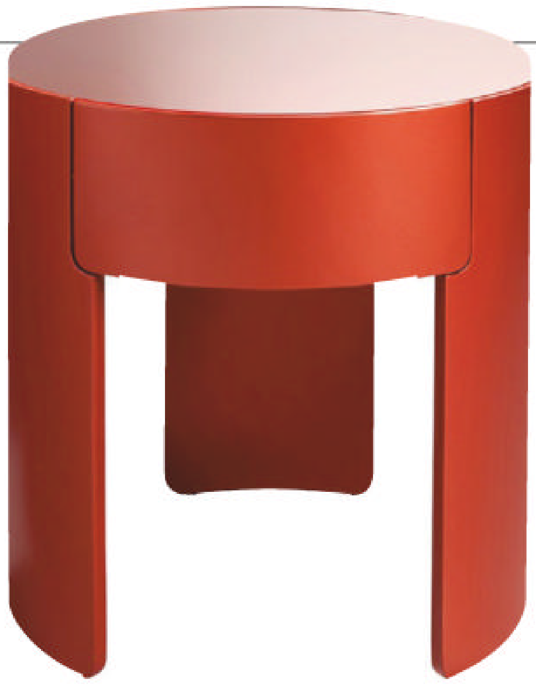
STYLISH NIGHTSTANDS WITH FANTASTIC BEDSIDE MANNER

BY _Kendra Jackson

FERN MINI

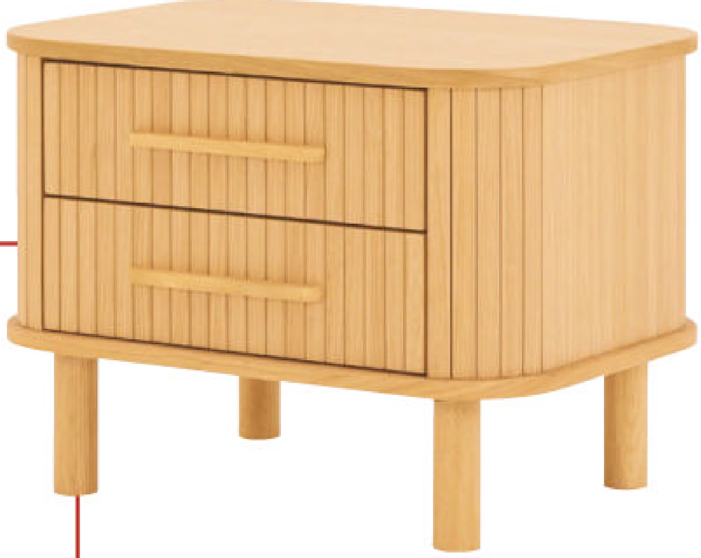
Part of the larger Fern family of hand-built sustainable steel lockers, Fern Mini from British manufacturer **Bisley** introduces a decidedly industrial edge to modern interiors. The flat-panel door (which can be right- or left-opening) is detailed with a sleek handle and charming ventilation holes; inside, a fixed shelf creates two compartments for storage. A total of 37 colourways are available, ranging from subdued and earthy to bold and vibrant.





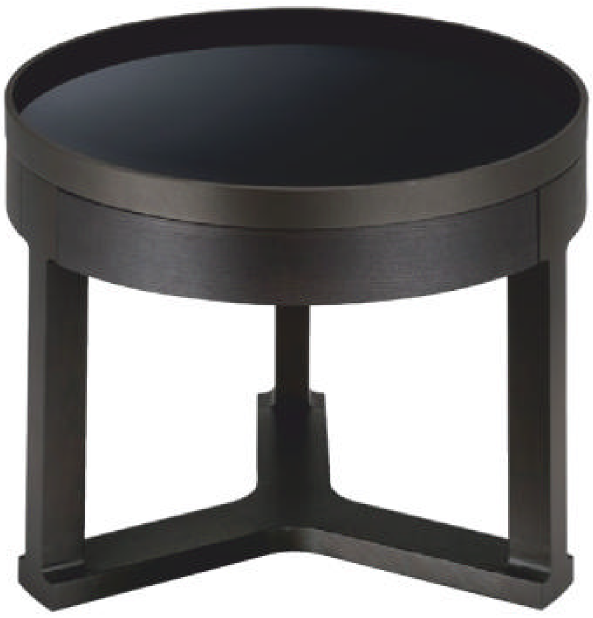
CUBA LIBRE

The latest piece to be added to French designer Daniel Rode's Cuba Libre series of tables for **Roche Bobois**, this nightstand has a simple yet sophisticated expression. Three slender and curved legs support the circular back-lacquered glass tabletop, which contains a petite storage space accessed by a left-opening door. It's offered in 18 matte or high-gloss lacquered finishes.



EASY EDGE ALL WOOD

With an all-wood construction, tambour panel detailing and curved lines, the Easy Edge nightstand from **Sundays** has a distinctly West Coast modern appeal. Two spacious soft-close drawers and a generous surface provide ample storage, while a clear matte-lacquer finish protects it from dings and dents. The striking table is a recent addition to the Easy Edge collection, which also includes nightstands with metal legs and drawer pulls.

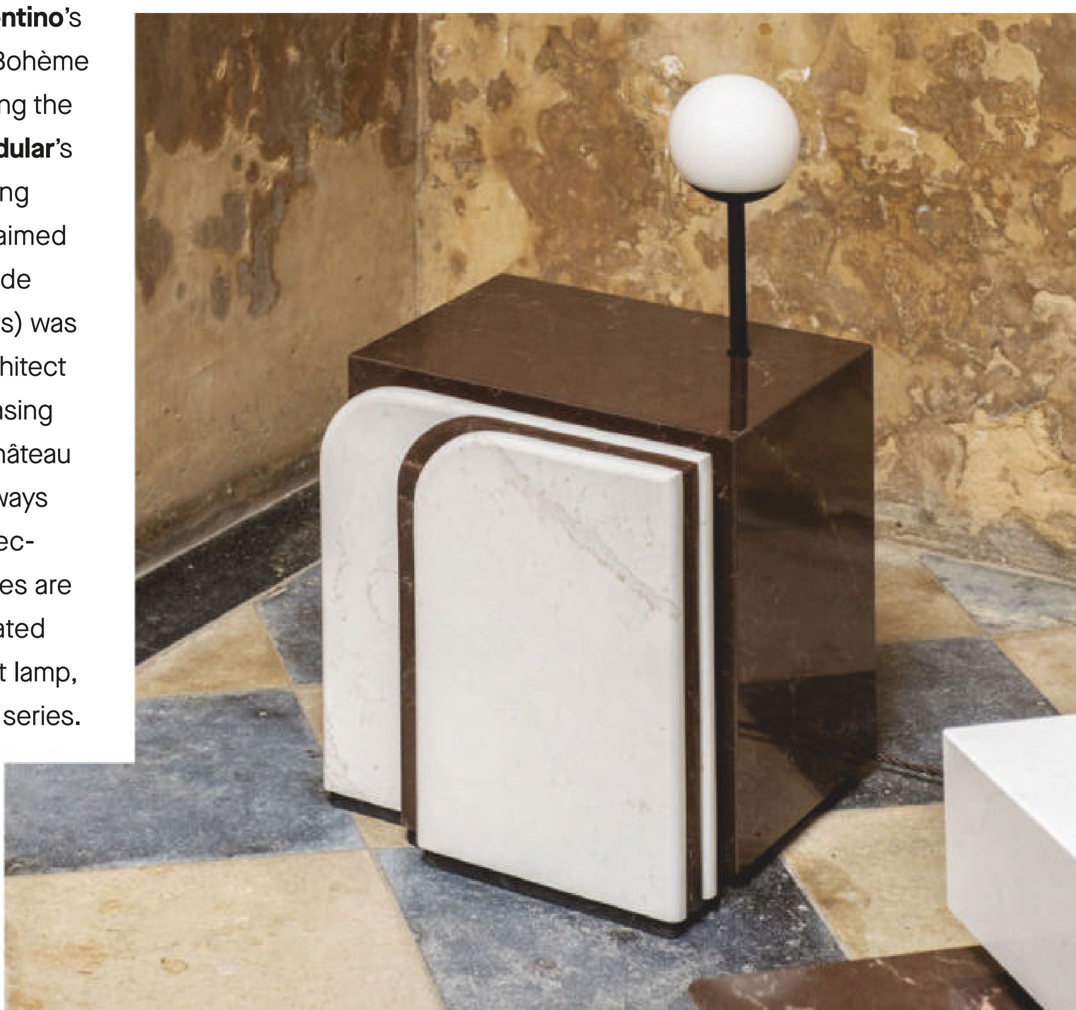


FONTE

A versatile table collection by **Molteni&C** creative director Vincent Van Duysen, Fonte marries exceptional craftsmanship with an approachable yet sophisticated style. Made with a solid oak frame (in coffee or black), the nightstand features a practical drawer and a raised burnished-aluminum surface ring to neatly corral items. Material options for the tabletop include multiple glossy or matte marbles, wood or black back-painted glass (shown).

COSENTINO × MODULAR CAPSULE COLLECTION

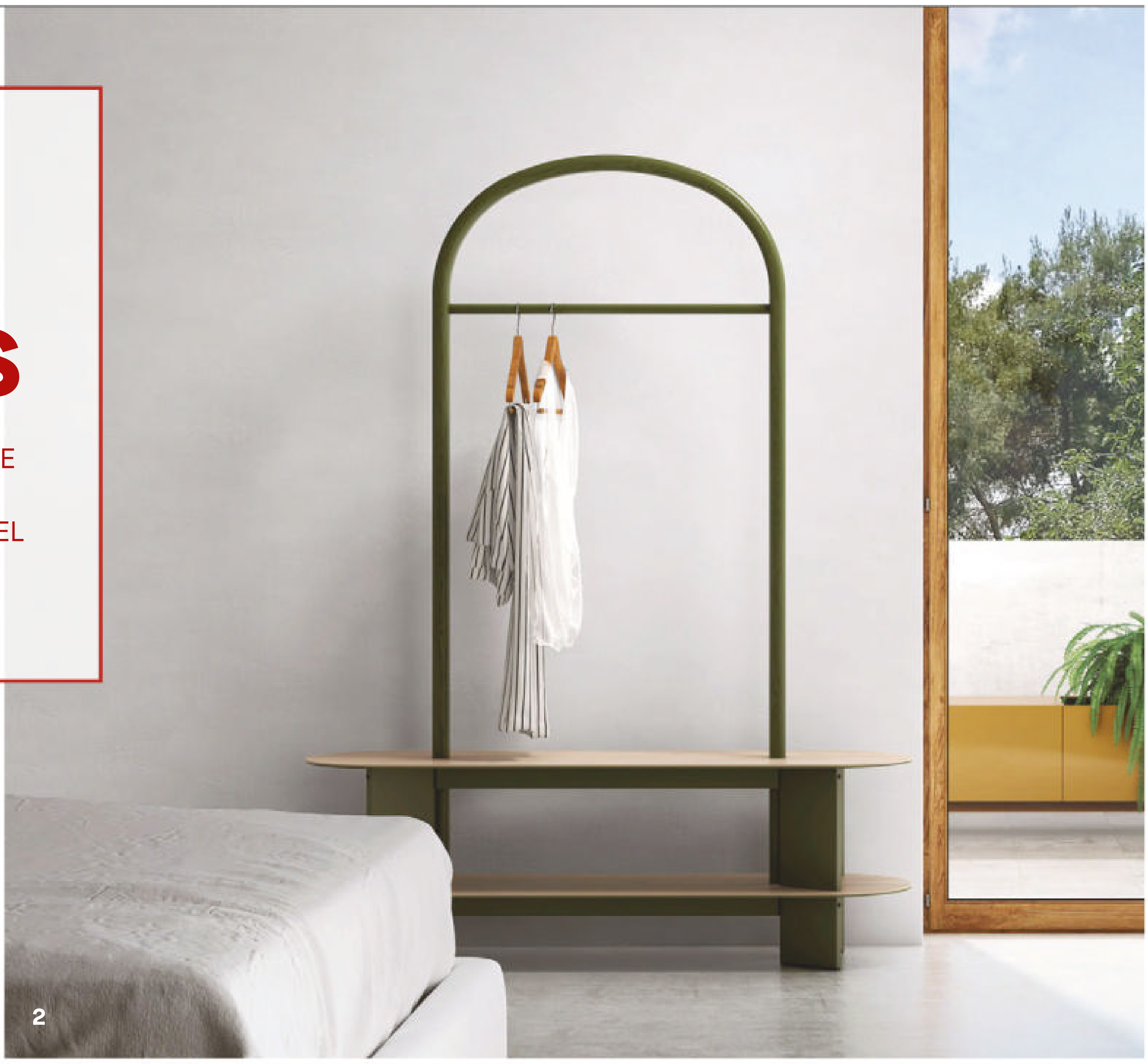
At once launching **Cosentino**'s new Silestone Le Chic Bohème collection and celebrating the 40th anniversary of **Modular**'s iconic Modupoint lighting series, this hospitality-aimed capsule collection of side tables (and coffee tables) was designed by interior architect Justine Kegels. Showcasing the Blanc Elysée and Château Brown full-body colourways from the Silestone collection, the sculptural tables are integrated with an updated panel-mount Modupoint lamp, an enhancement to the series.



Clothes Quarters

OPEN OR CLOSED, THESE STORAGE SOLUTIONS KEEP GARMENTS ORGANIZED AT HOME OR IN A HOTEL

BY _Kendra Jackson



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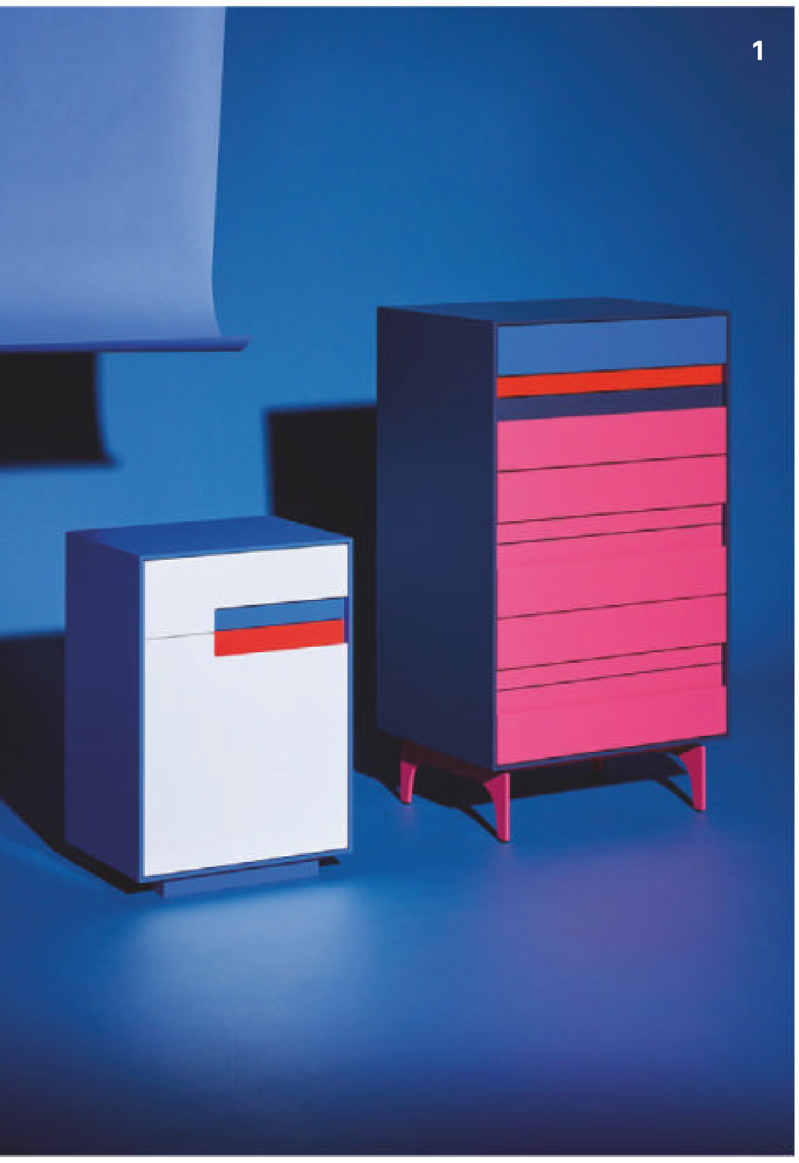

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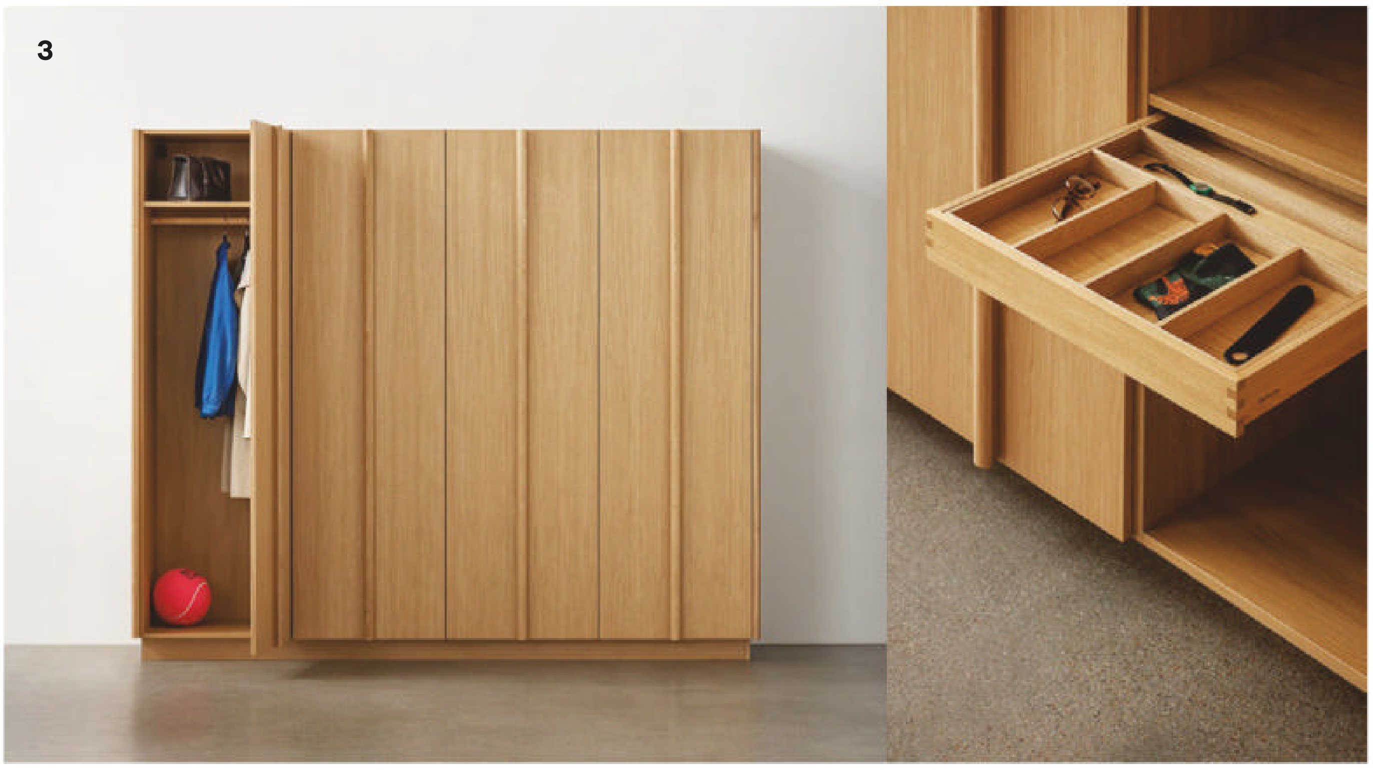

3

1 CANVAS

In the extensive furniture series Canvas, by industrial designer Christian Haas for **Schönbuch**, every detail allows for complete customization. The storage units (in varying heights, widths and depths) can be fronted by doors, hinged flaps or drawers, which in turn can be paired with one of seven types of grips; internally, fixed shelves, middle walls and drawers can be configured to suit personal storage needs. Each unit can be set on a plinth or legs or be wall-mounted and is available in the brand's full range of rich and saturated colourways, in matte, glossy or mirrored finishes.

2 CROMA WARDROBE

Colourful, shapely and infused with personality, the Croma collection of hospitality storage pieces was developed by multidisciplinary design firm Lagranja for Valencia-based **Systemtronic**. Included within the series is the Croma wardrobe, an open-rail structure able to accommodate up to 15 articles of clothing, with two lower shelves for bags, shoes, suitcases and other items. Made from sustainable aluminum and solid ash, the wardrobe — along with the valet stand, coat rack, mirrors, side tables, shelving trolleys and benches — can be lacquered in six nature-inspired colourways.

3 REFORM WARDROBE AND STORAGE

Danish design brand **Reform** moves from the kitchen to the bedroom with its introduction of wardrobes and storage solutions. A modular system, the new line includes elements to configure walk-in or full-wall closets, freestanding or built-in wardrobes and cabinets in the bedroom (and other rooms in the home) with the same designer fronts as the kitchen systems (Column by Inga Sempé is shown). Interiors can be fitted with a nearly endless combination of drawers, shelves, organizers and dividers; a vast range of colourways, finishes and hardware accessories is offered.

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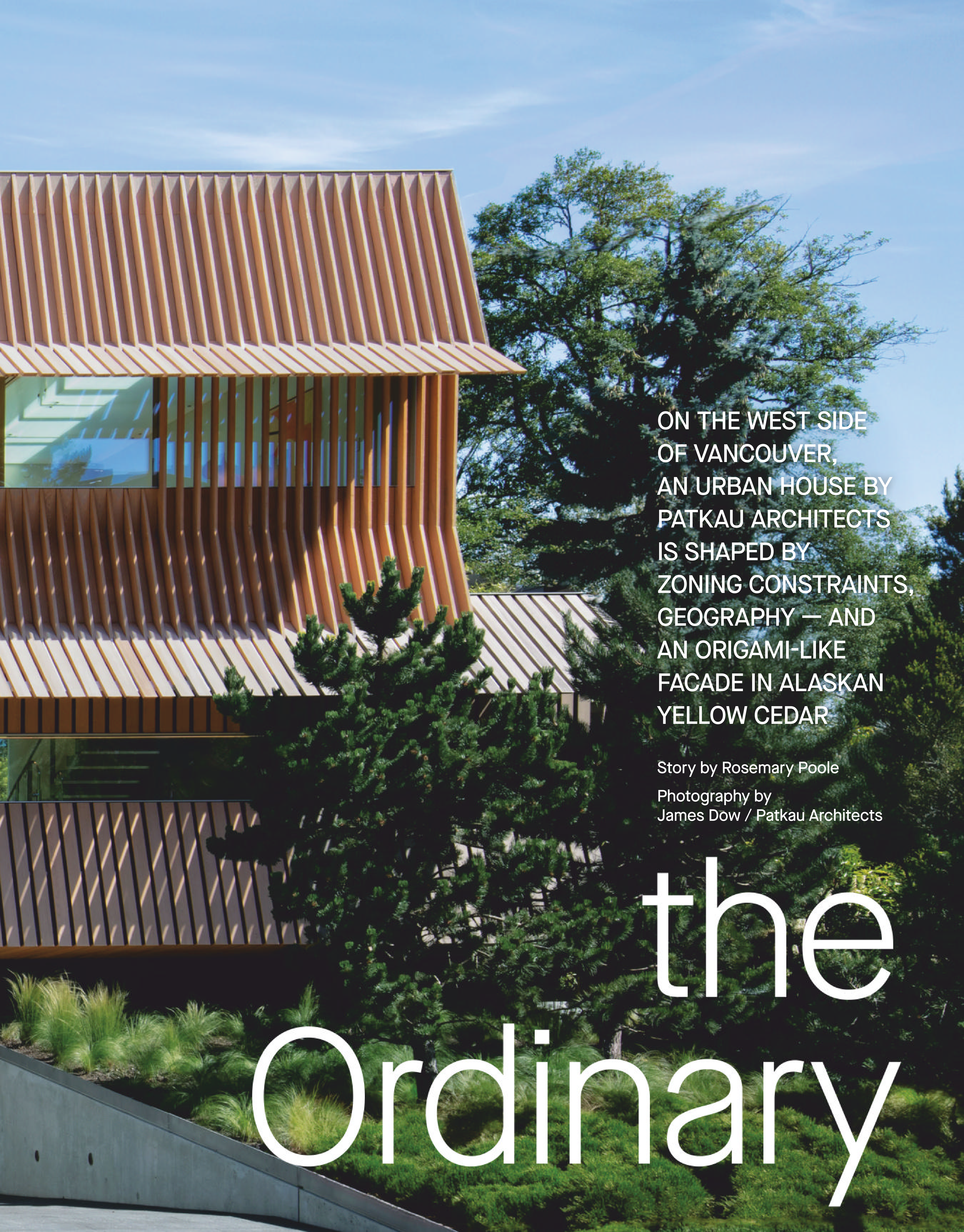


ON THE WEST SIDE OF VANCOUVER, AN URBAN HOUSE BY PATKAU ARCHITECTS IS SHAPED BY ZONING CONSTRAINTS, GEOGRAPHY — AND AN ORIGAMI-LIKE FACADE IN ALASKAN YELLOW CEDAR

Story by Rosemary Poole

Photography by
James Dow / Patkau Architects

the Ordinary

Where does a house begin?

Does it originate from the ground? Its outlook to open water? Does it emerge from materials? The dialogue between wood, steel and concrete? The genesis of this particular house — a gracefully staggered three-level structure in Vancouver's West Point Grey neighbourhood — can be traced to a drawing. Not a blue-sky dream of all that was possible, but rather a three-dimensional diagram that modelled what it could not be based on the limitations set by the city's zoning bylaws and the land itself: a modest 15-by-34-metre lot that is typical of the setting.

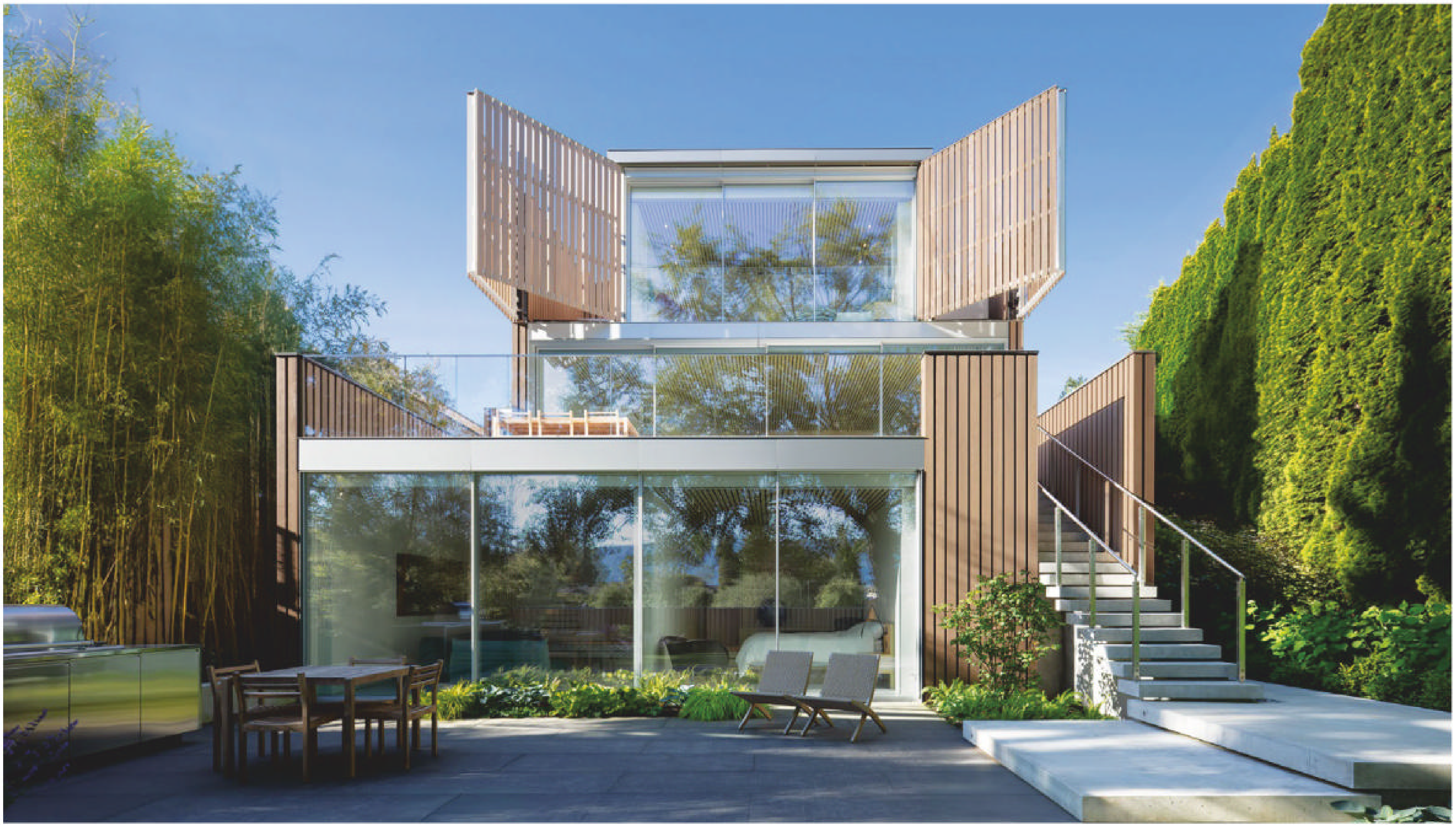
"Not only do you have a limit on area," says architect John Patkau of Patkau Architects, who led the project with principal Greg Boothroyd, "you have a limit on the profile of the house, you have limit on the height, and each one puts a constraint on the project — and they often work against each other." Adds Boothroyd, "The bylaws basically try to make houses that are like a wedding-cake shape, where the floors get smaller as they go up. We think it came from some kind of postmodern ideas of what houses should look like in the eighties, and there are many obscurities within it."

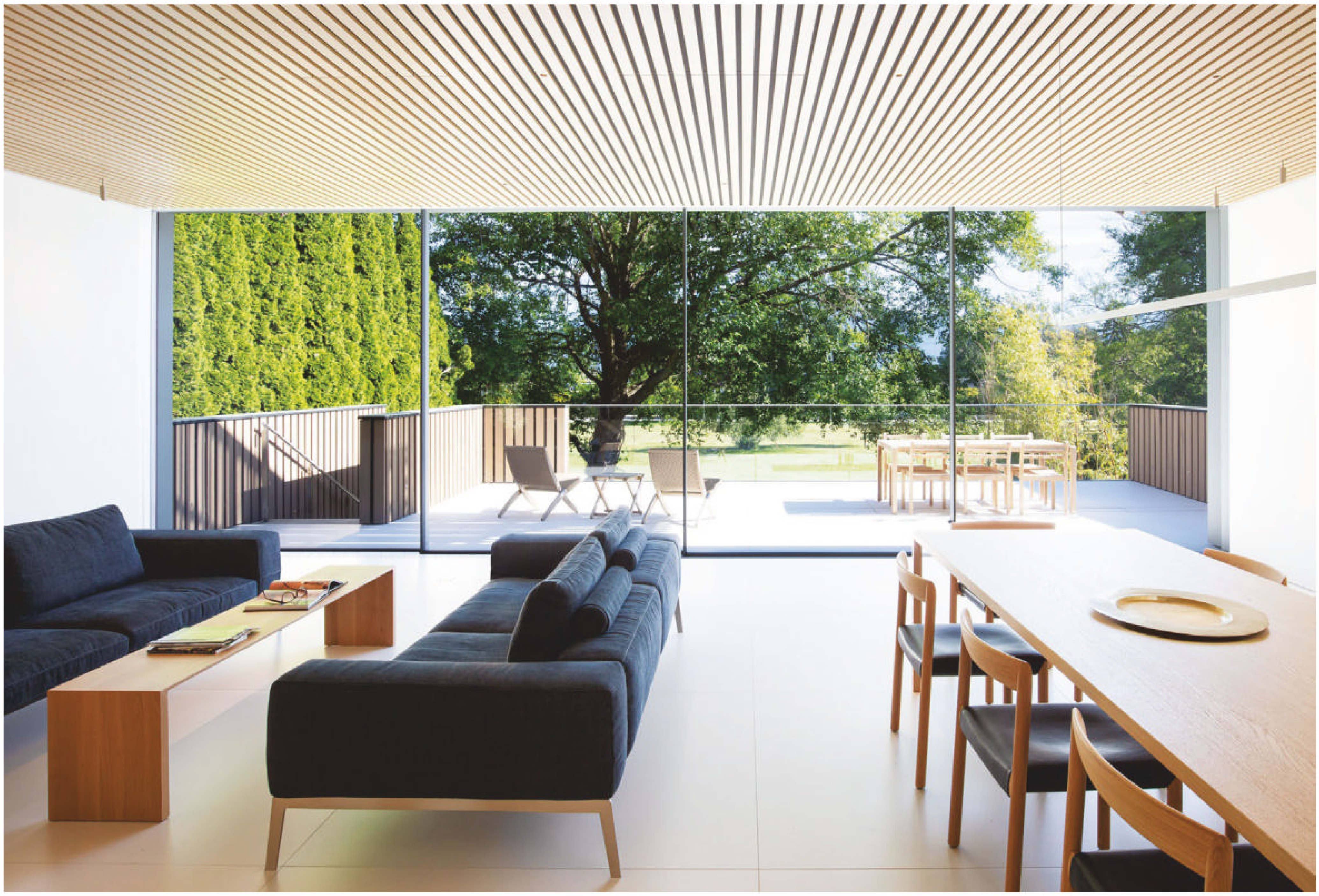
Resting inside the bounds of convention, even fitting into a streetscape, is an unusual condition for Patkau Architects. To look through the firm's portfolio

PREVIOUS SPREAD: The front yard meadow, designed by Patkau Architects in collaboration with Bearmark, is planted with a mix of hebe, catmint, "Firefly" heather and Mexican feathergrass, as well as a trio of Scots pines.

ABOVE: The homeowner's enviable art collection includes Plague Mask 3 (fever dream) by BC-based Indigenous Canadian artist Brian Jungen.

BELOW: A tiered elevation comes into full view at the back of the house, where operable shutters slide away on a track to provide the primary bedroom with a majestic vista.





across a distinguished 47-year history is to tumble headlong down a rabbit hole of complex ideas, experimentation and, above all else, singularity of form. The founding principals, John and Patricia Patkau, have long been considered artist-architects, their buildings likened to mixed-media sculptures informed by exhaustive research into what the materials are capable of achieving. Those materials may carry over from project to project, museum to museum, house to house, but the form, the what, the how are different every time. Puzzling through it all to create something original is always an education, and an exercise in patience and time. "A three-year process would be quick for us," says Patkau. This house took five.

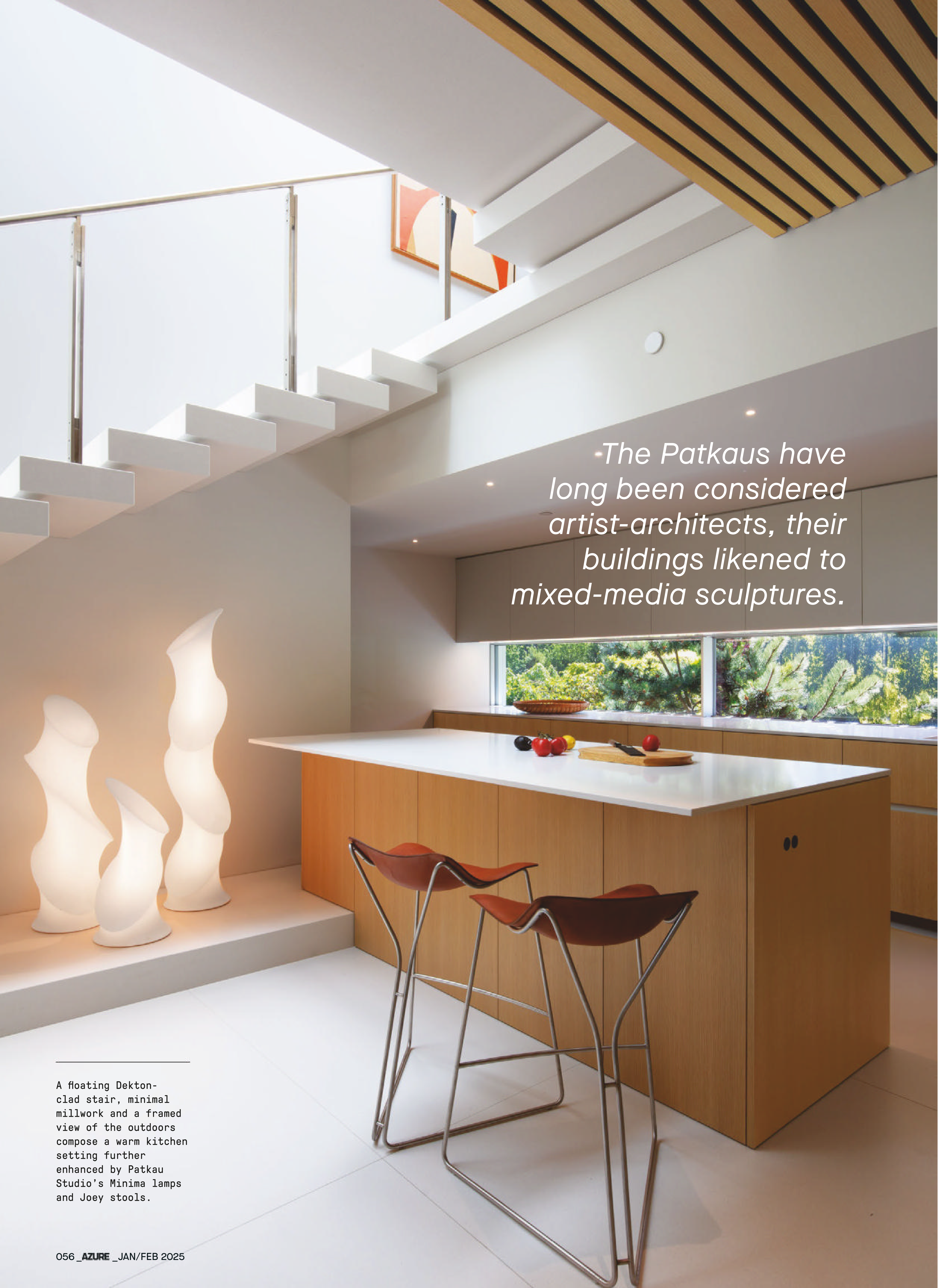
Working within their model, the architects embarked on a process of inquiry and looked for opportunities in the bylaws for innovation. Their boldest response comes in the form of an elaborate wood facade that was added onto the house to give it character in three dimensions. The zoning rules allow for projections into the yard if such moves protect the house's glazed south-facing elevation from the sun. The architects took that idea one step further: They used the facade to filter sunlight, yes, but also to carefully edit out the surroundings to create privacy and focus the view. Suspended from thermal isolation clips in some places and a thin steel framework in others, slatted panels crafted from Alaskan yellow cedar envelop the house, folding and weaving their way down to create awnings and sunscreens, like a piece of origami. At the back of the home, the facade transitions, ceding the stage to super-scaled openings. On the top floor, a pair of dramatic folding shutters wing out from the primary bedroom, like a bird preparing to take flight. Required by zoning to be movable, they operate similarly to a bi-fold closet door on a mechanized track: "The same principle on a much grander scale," says Boothroyd.

The slope of the site allowed the garage to be tucked into the lower level, freeing up the main floor to operate as a single, continuous space containing the living and dining areas and kitchen. Outside the wall of sliding glass doors, a capacious outdoor zone was created by cleverly combining the allowable space for a deck and a roof terrace. Beyond the property sits a quiet park that is used mostly by the immediate neighbours who are wise to its existence. From the vantage point of the house, the park takes on the appearance of a grassy field rolling gently down and away in the direction of Locarno Beach, the flat grey water of English Bay more visible in wintertime, when the mature alder tree at the edge of the yard has lost its leaves.

On each of the house's three levels, the open spaces are disrupted by cabinet-like volumes containing private zones, such as bathing or dressing areas. Their wood panelling demarcates them from the pure white wallboard used to provide a clean backdrop for the homeowner's art collection. Most of the interior walls are reinforced with plywood to ease installation, most notably in the lower-level gallery space, which sees a steady rotation of contemporary and historic works, many from BC artists, including Stan Douglas, Ian Wallace and Brian Jungen.

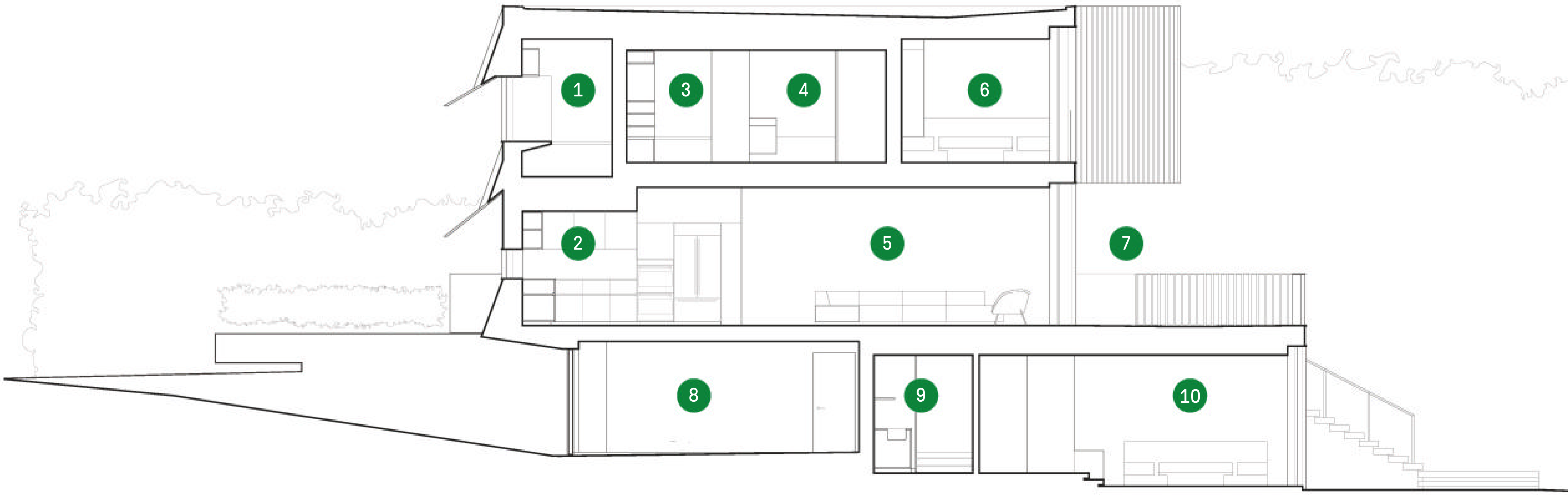
Simplicity of form is, of course, the most difficult to achieve. The stairs that rise from the main floor to the upper level

TOP: The interiors throughout feature porcelain tile flooring from Dekton by Cosentino and acoustic ceilings crafted with quarter-sawn white oak-veneered slats.



> *The Patkaus have long been considered artist-architects, their buildings likened to mixed-media sculptures.*

A floating Dekton-clad stair, minimal millwork and a framed view of the outdoors compose a warm kitchen setting further enhanced by Patkau Studio's Minima lamps and Joey stools.



1. Study
2. Kitchen
3. Dressing room
4. Bathroom
5. Living room
6. Primary bedroom
7. Terrace
8. Garage
9. Laundry
10. Secondary bedroom

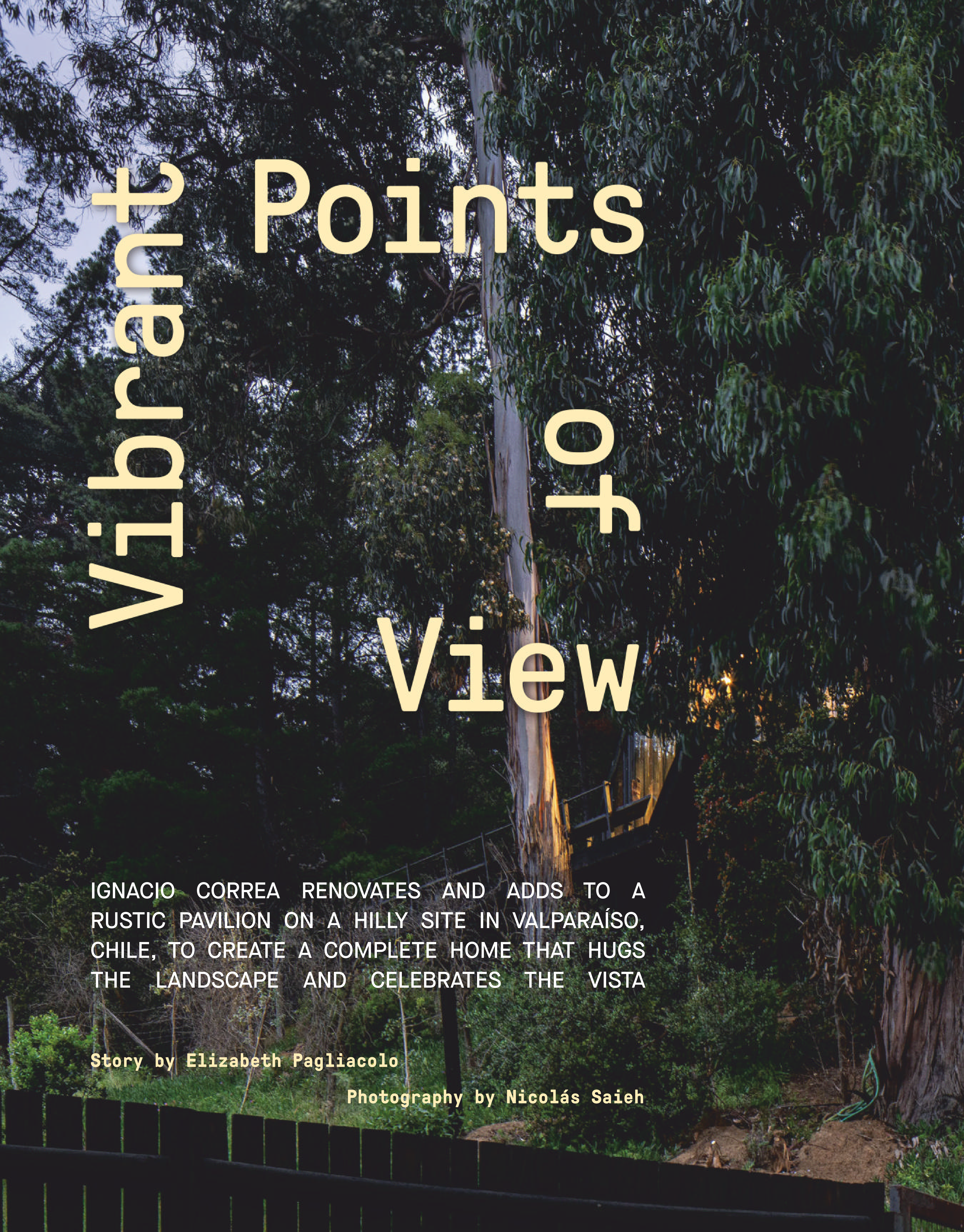
ABOVE: In the second-floor study, the origami-like facade's screens of Alaskan yellow cedar strategically filter the street-side view.

BELOW: The primary bedroom is furnished with a custom-designed bed and floating side tables. Knoll's Womb chair, in red, completes the scene.

seem to ascend weightlessly, each tread encased in Dekton porcelain tile with mitred edges to give the appearance of a monolithic block. The same material is used for the flooring throughout the entire footprint of the house. Overhead, ribbons of slatted quarter-sawn white oak veneer traverse the ceilings in a similar fashion. Backed with a sound-absorbing layer, they lend an abiding sense of quiet more common to a remote rural setting. "The ceiling represented our best opportunity to give the house a warm acoustic feel, as opposed to [the] hard, reflective one" typical of modern art galleries, says Patkau.

As we close our conversation, the architects debate how many houses they've built in their tenure — more than 20, they concur. Each one represents a complete vision for living in its particular context, with no detail overlooked: Building begets interiors begets landscape and, with increasing focus, furniture and accessories. Notice the sculptural Seussian lamps that dot the stairways, office and bathroom. All are from the Minima series by Patkau Studio, a burgeoning division that operates out of the workshop attached to the firm's offices. The lights are curious things, made from a stretchy paper pulp composite developed to achieve the minimum surface that can enclose the volume between the various components. "We're trying to create objects that are driven by the same sensibility as the architectural elements, but they always have their autonomy. They are a design investigation on their own," says Patkau.

Where does a house begin? A more fitting question might be, where does it end? **AZ**



Vibrant Points of View

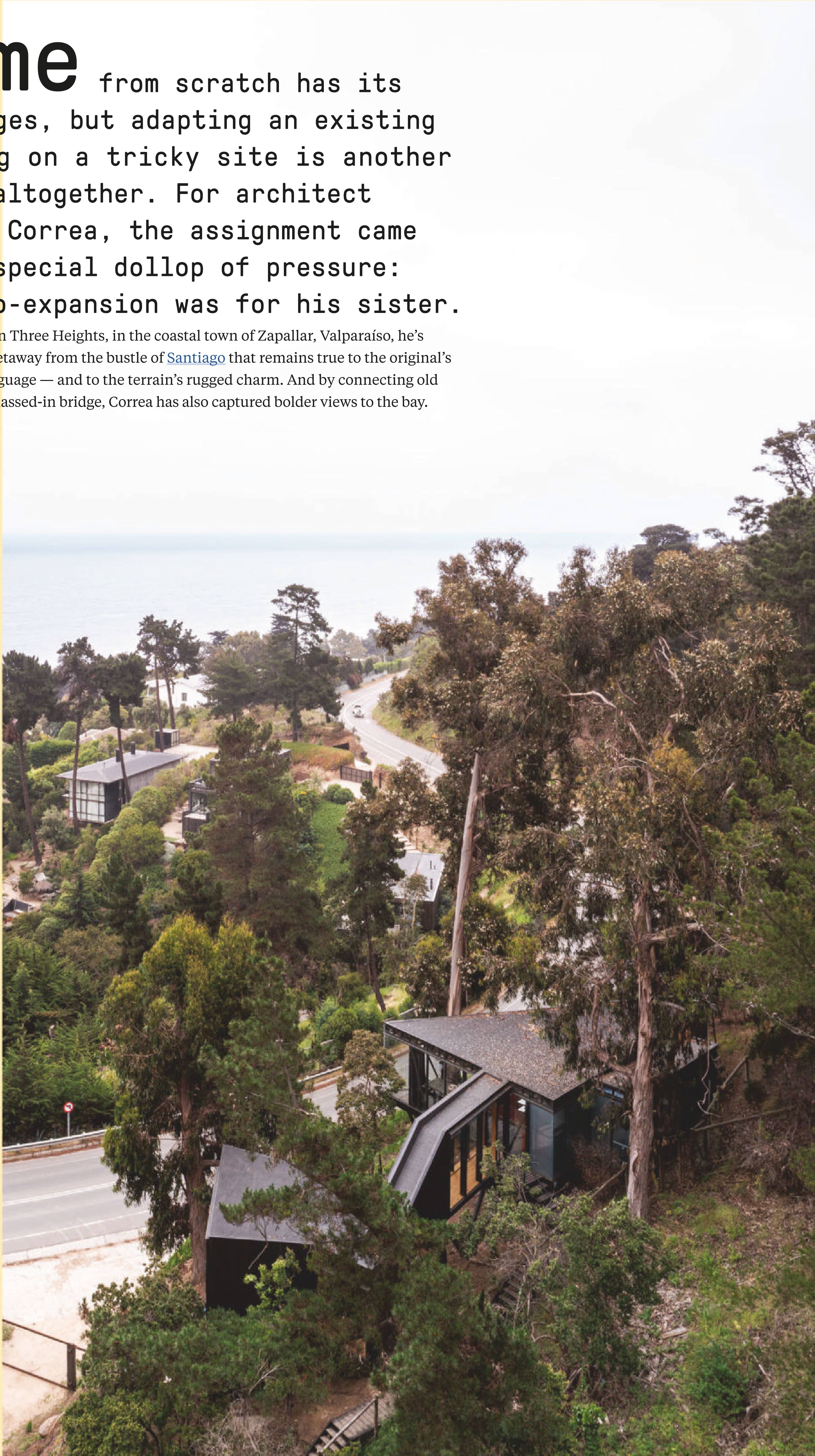
IGNACIO CORREA RENOVATES AND ADDS TO A RUSTIC PAVILION ON A HILLY SITE IN VALPARAÍSO, CHILE, TO CREATE A COMPLETE HOME THAT HUGS THE LANDSCAPE AND CELEBRATES THE VISTA

Story by Elizabeth Pagliacolo

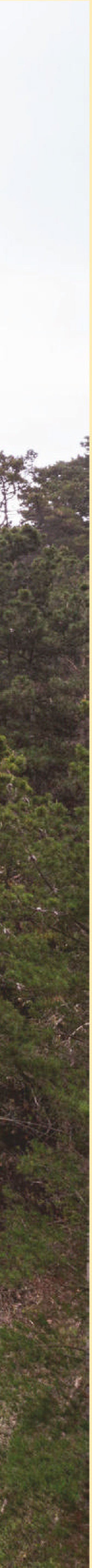
Photography by Nicolás Saieh

Designing a home from scratch has its challenges, but adapting an existing building on a tricky site is another matter altogether. For architect Ignacio Correa, the assignment came with a special dollop of pressure: the reno-expansion was for his sister.

With the House in Three Heights, in the coastal town of Zapallar, Valparaíso, he's delivered her a getaway from the bustle of Santiago that remains true to the original's architectural language — and to the terrain's rugged charm. And by connecting old and new with a glassed-in bridge, Correa has also captured bolder views to the bay.

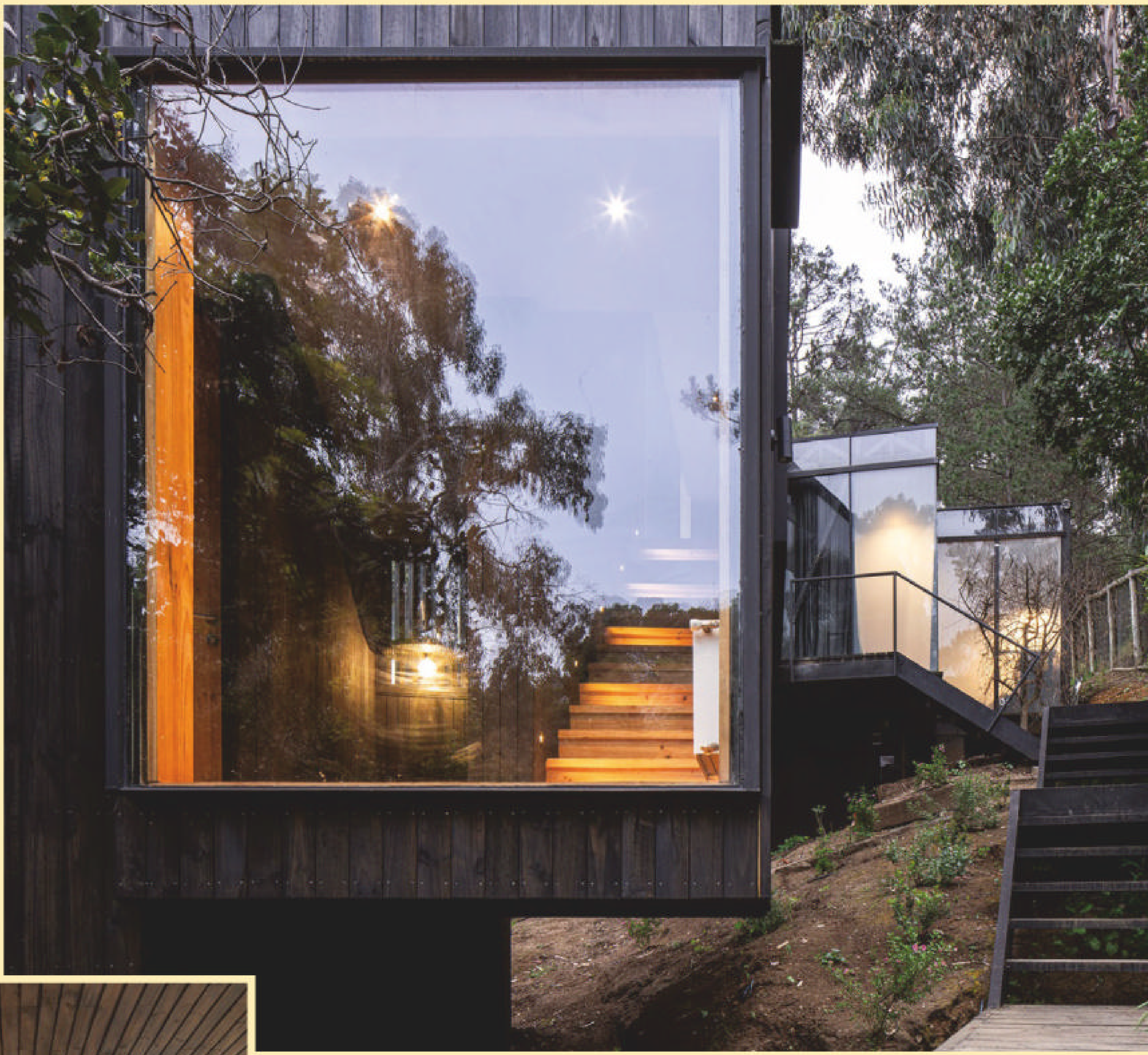


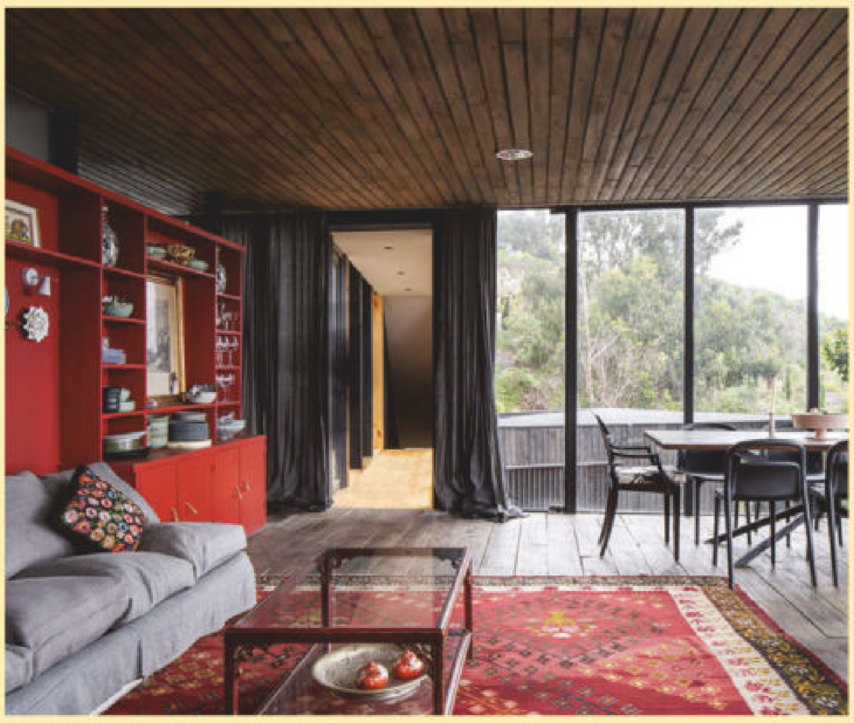
RIGHT: The original triangular pavilion, a former atelier of the architect Horacio Smith, sits at the top of a sloped site. A glassed-in bridge connects it to the new bedroom volume that steps down into the terrain.

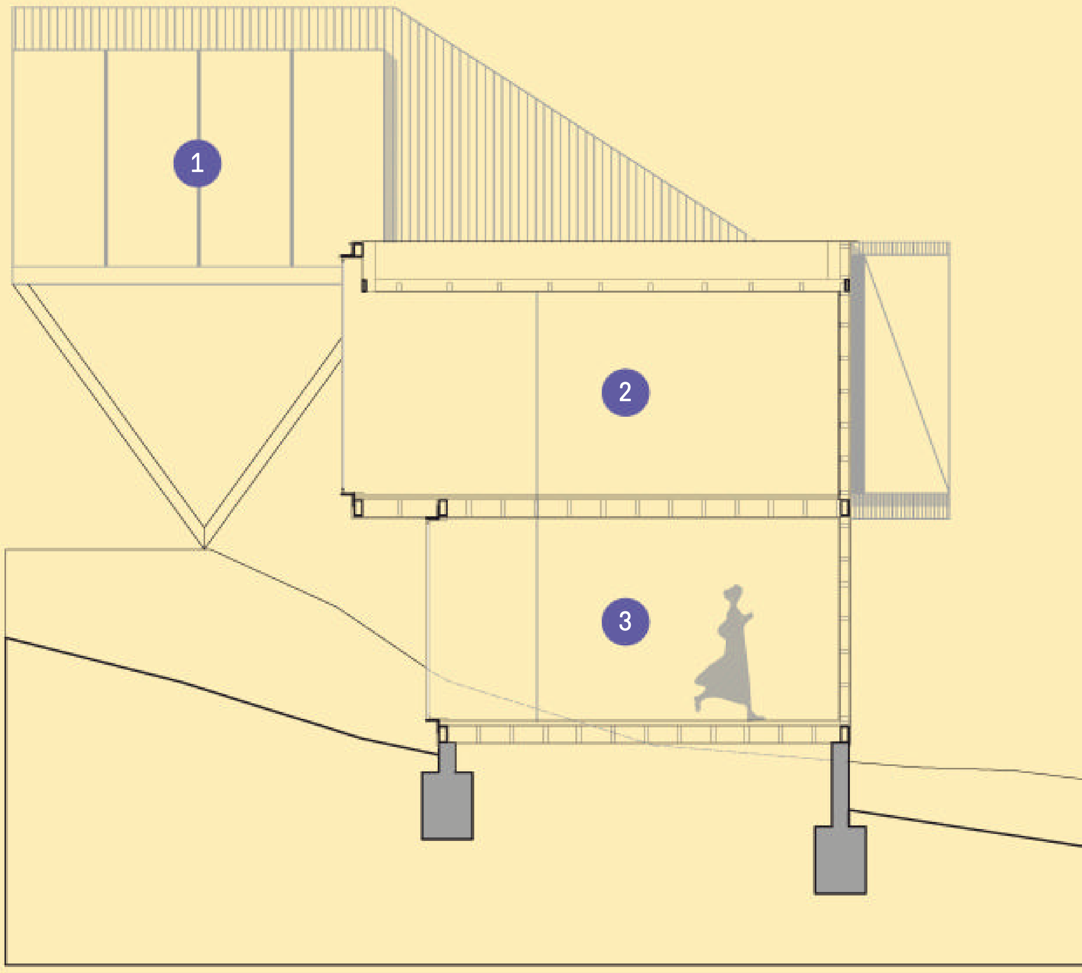


RIGHT: At the end of the bridge, a floor-to-ceiling window provides a view of the bay. Inside, the staircase connects to the primary bedroom.

BELOW: The original volume was gently updated. It contains the kitchen, living and dining areas. Beyond the curtain, the bridge unfolds.







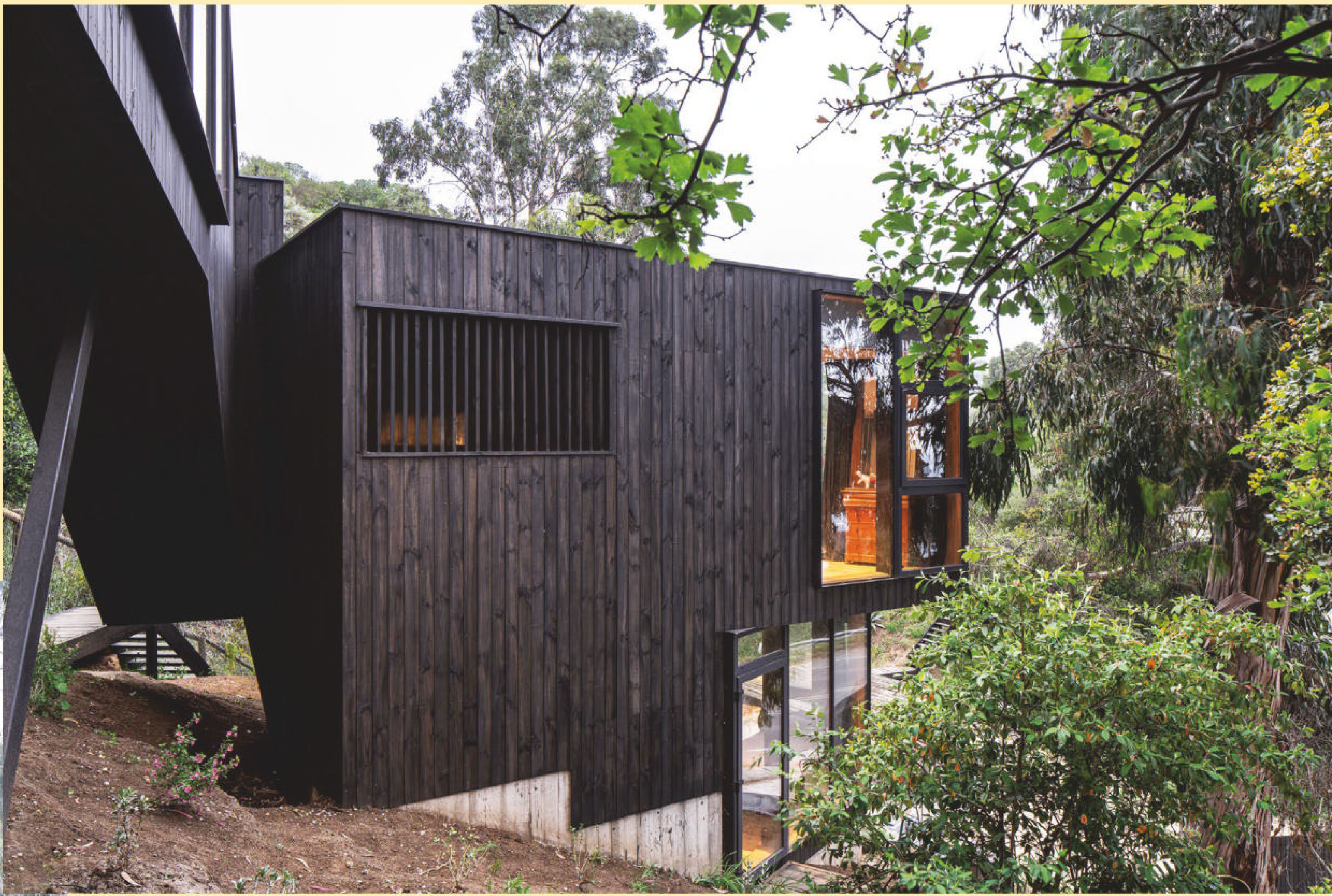
1. Bridge
2. Primary bedroom
3. Kids' bedroom

Set atop a hill, the original building is a triangular one-storey volume. Its architect, Horacio Smith, had used it more as an atelier than a home but had equipped it with a kitchen and bath. Before erecting additions to this rustic house, Correa began by reimagining the approach to the fuller landscape: Changing the access to the site was among the most important aspects of the project. Previously, one would walk up a set of stairs to get to the top of the hill, reaching the Smith-designed structure straight-on. Now, passage to the entire house, old and new, begins at the hilltop, behind the home. The perspective of the bay that this vantage point affords is the anchoring motif. "We wanted to construct this photography," says Correa, "and to measure this view with both volumes."

A composition in three materials — wood, steel and concrete — the multi-part home unfolds as a sequence of spaces. Seemingly floating in mid-air but secured in place by a V-shaped steel column, the bridge creates both separation and connection; it links the original house, which was minimally updated, to the new, double-tier bedroom volume, which features weathered wood cladding and sits on a concrete foundation. But it also achieves a distance between the two that was important for Correa, who was adamant that the home be light on the land while spanning across it. "We wanted to preserve the hill and to have you understand what this place was like before there was architecture."

Once inside the bridge, you descend a staircase into the new side, which steps down into the landscape. At the joint where bridge meets addition, a fully glazed end frames a stunning vista. "At this point," he says, "you understand the bay, the original volume and the new house." From there, you can step further down to the lowest level (where the kids' bedrooms are).

RIGHT: Secured by a V-shaped steel column, the bridge seems to float. Correa was adamant that the structure be light on the land. The home's wood cladding, meanwhile, blends into the forested setting.

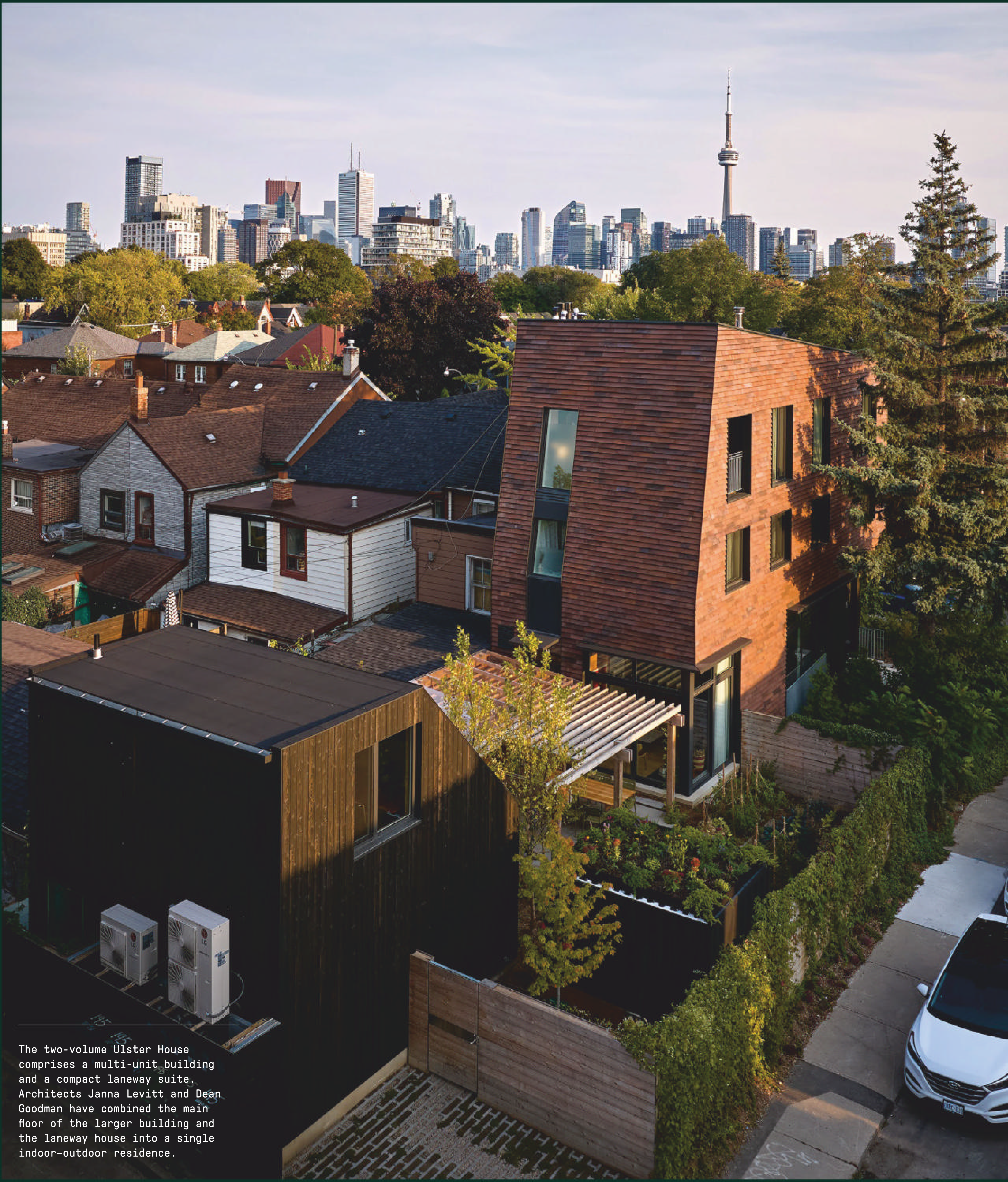


FROM THE BRIDGE, YOU UNDERSTAND THE BAY, THE ORIGINAL VOLUME AND THE NEW HOUSE.

LEFT: The primary bedroom's wall of glass is anchored by a wide oiled-pinewood border that, as Correa says, makes you understand that "you're in a constructed place."

"We wanted our volume to be more solid," says Correa, who still drew from the original's palette and generous expanses of glass. This sense of solidity comes through in the upper bedroom. Whereas many an architect would seek to dissolve the distinction between indoors and out and conjure a sense of weightlessness, Correa inserted warm architectural details that anchor the residents in the architecture. The ceiling height is low to create a cozy ambience, and a deep oiled-pinewood border wraps the floor-to-ceiling openings. "The first house was a glass house, but I wanted the windows of the new volume to have some elements that don't expose you so literally to the landscape. You feel that you're in the house and looking at the landscape. You feel this construction, and you understand you're in a constructed place." In this way, the architecture envelops you.

So far, the client is pleased. Correa's sister and her kids stay in the home as often as they can. "Zapallar is very close to Santiago, so it's very easy to go there on the weekends," says Correa. "They have many friends in the area, so I think it was a really good idea for her to get this place." **AZ**



The two-volume Ulster House comprises a multi-unit building and a compact laneway suite. Architects Janna Levitt and Dean Goodman have combined the main floor of the larger building and the laneway house into a single indoor-outdoor residence.

CITIZEN/ DEVELOPER/ DESIGNER/

In Toronto's Harbord Village, Janna Levitt and the ReHousing project are charting an elegant — if sometimes perilous — course for a sensitive new model of urban densification

STORY BY
STEFAN NOVAKOVIC

PHOTOGRAPHY BY
DOUBLESPACE

ONCE IN A WHILE, A HOUSE BREAKS THE MOULD. On downtown Toronto's residential streets, tight rows of century-old dwellings are occasionally interrupted by something newer, taller, bigger. But that's usually another single-family home, its footprint seemingly swelling in proportion to the levels of wealth necessary to enter a prohibitive market. As the houses get larger and young families are increasingly priced out of the urban core altogether, their communities are contracting. Many of the city's neighbourhoods — and the majority of Toronto's forbiddingly zoned land area — quietly face the problem of declining population.

At first glance, the building on the northeast corner of Ulster and Lippincott Streets in Harbord Village might appear to fit the pattern. Handsomely clad in an array of clay tiles, the three-storey form — contoured and articulated to preserve the site's majestic Blue Spruce and to meet the rhythm of the angular roofscape — is at once understated and eye-catching. Rising a storey above its older neighbours, the

308-square-metre structure embodies the clean lines and simple geometry that make for a decidedly contemporary presence, yet with a scale and materiality that speaks to its intimate residential context. A pair of urbane entrances, one on either street, hint at an infusion of density.

The real surprise is inside. The building was designed by Janna Levitt and Dean Goodman, partners in life and work; their firm, LGA Architectural Partners, is acclaimed for its sensitive modernist ethos, its dedication to sustainable architecture and its civic leadership. They have organized the building into four spacious apartments, including a small laneway suite. Two dual-level units (with bedrooms and living areas on separate tiers) occupy the upper floors, where they have access to ample natural light and recessed terraces. A definite step up from a typical Toronto basement suite, the building's lowest level features a reasonably light-filled and airy one-bedroom apartment.

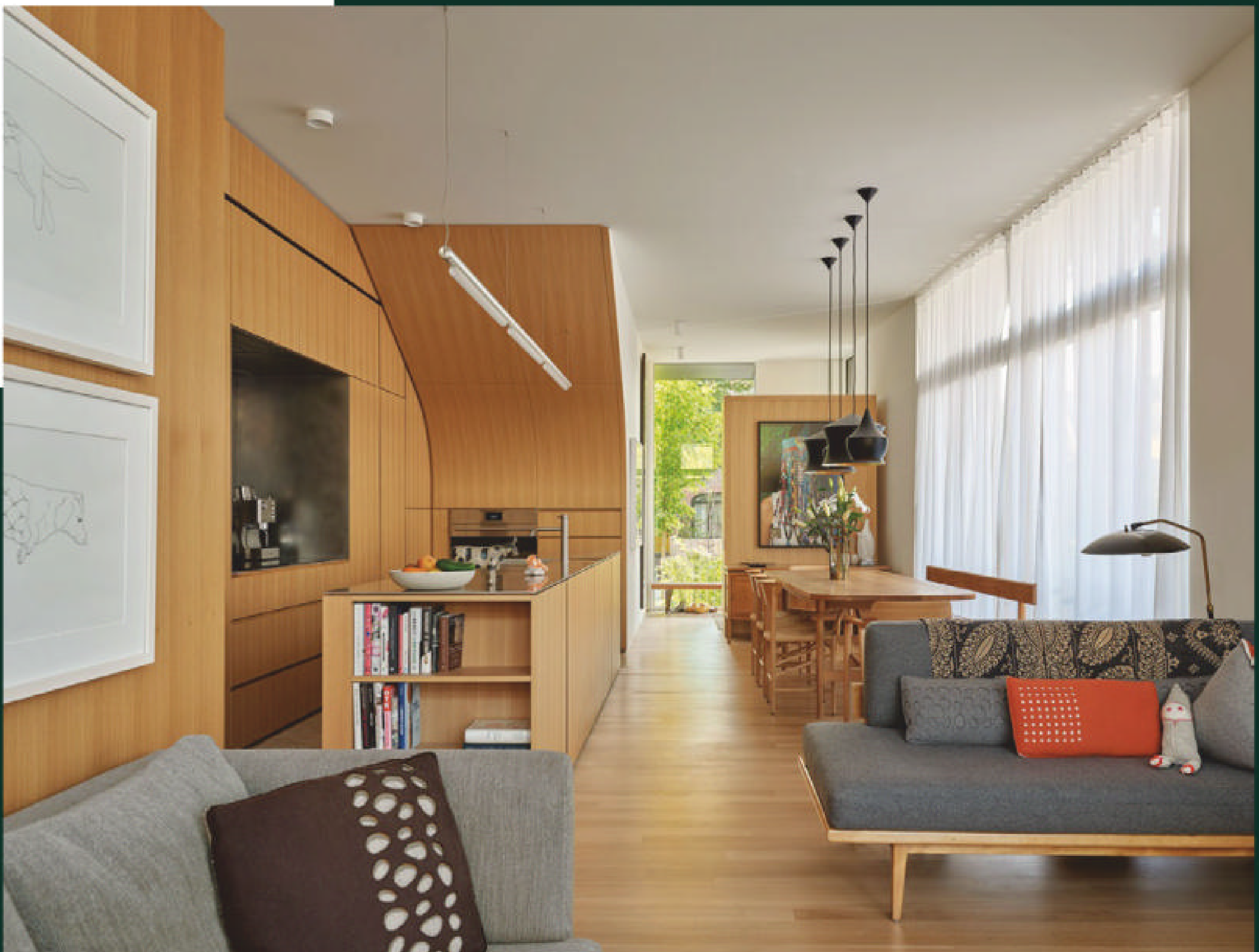
The most unusual home is in the middle: Levitt and Goodman's own abode encompasses both the ground floor and the laneway house, the two zones linked by a trellis-covered walkway and patio. "We were very careful to design the two to enhance the feeling of being removed, intimate and in nature (with the laneway house) and open, more buttoned-down and urban (in the street floor), and we programmed the courtyard to be the joint," says Levitt. In the main volume, the showpiece kitchen features a stainless steel–encased cooking alcove and a long dining table set against the generous glazing that faces a vibrant garden landscape (around the spruce) by Lorraine Johnson. Throughout, the handsomely crafted interiors are warm and inviting, an effect amplified by the pleasantly tactile oak veneer finishes that wrap them.

The home's separation of private and social zones means that to get to the bedroom, situated in the skylit laneway unit, you need to step outside — even into the brisk air of a November day. But Levitt and Goodman, who downsized from their previous home, embrace the outdoors year-round; Goodman built a sauna in the backyard, and the duo makes the balance of hot and cold an intentional part of daily life. "Walking to the laneway house late at night, under the canopy, offers a different experience in every season, and the changes in weather and temperature are part of that," says Levitt. "The sauna is the all-season anchor. Many nights, we sit outside, after a long sauna session, in housecoats and slippers, really feeling warm in the cold — and feeling great being able to be outside in a wild garden in the middle of winter."

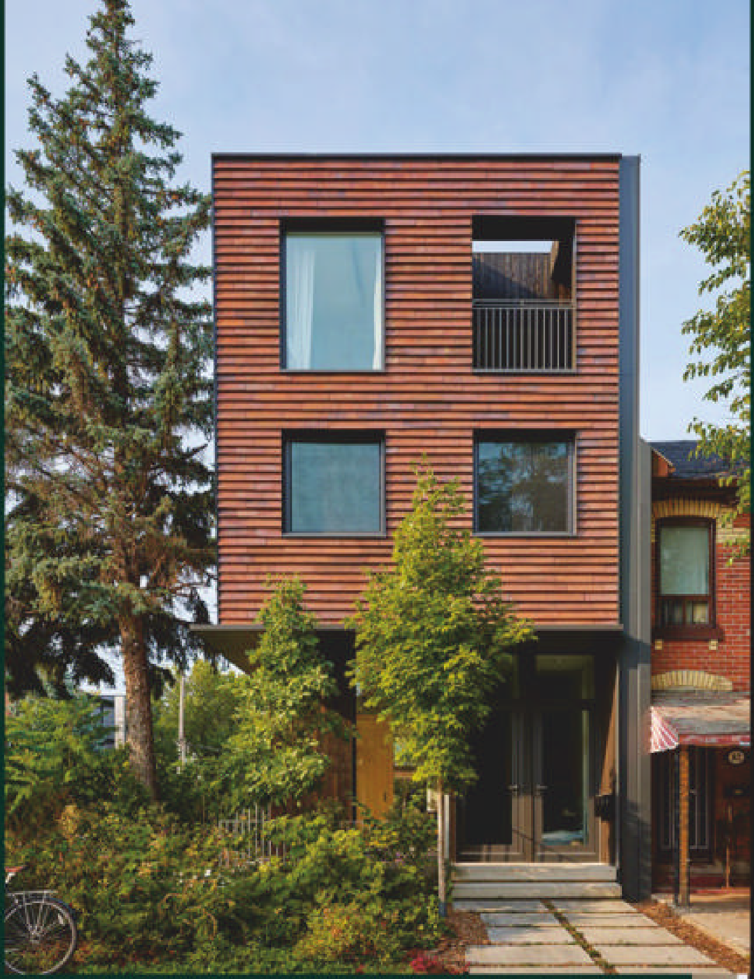
It's not for everybody. Yet the duo's Ulster House is both a unique home and a proof of concept for something much bigger: Together with University of Toronto professor Michael Piper (who runs the school's Tuf Lab) and housing researcher Samantha Eby, Levitt is a co-founder of ReHousing. Supported by the Neptis Foundation, the non-profit offers a comprehensive design and construction catalogue of potential renovations, additions and redevelopments for the 13 most common housing types across the single-family "yellow belt" zoning boundaries that span most of the City of Toronto and its immediate suburbs. Ulster House, then, represents an incremental step toward weaving much-needed housing deep into the fibre of the urban fabric. It might boast a site-specific architectural élan, but its key ideas are designed to be replicated. For instance, the main volume's ground floor and the laneway house can be reconfigured as stand-alone one-bedroom suites without making changes to the building envelope — resulting in a total of five units.

On a systemic level, ReHousing is aimed at diversifying a city defined by stark "tall and sprawl" dichotomies of density and a development industry dominated by economies of scale. And it does so by "empowering citizen developers in converting single-family homes into multi-unit housing" — a pattern that, while often overlooked, actually shaped much of our urban history, as Levitt explains. "You'd carve up apartments out of houses, maybe you'd rent them out to family or relatives, and you'd make a multi-family home out of a single-family home," she says. "This is where the idea of the 'citizen developer' came from: It's a bottom-up response to creating more housing."

ReHousing arrives at a moment when the increasing severity of the housing crisis has spurred a gradual — albeit halting — easing of the 20th century's draconian zoning and code restrictions. Toronto is joining cities across North America allowing densification in single-family communities. This has resulted in new laneway house and garden suite regulations (in 2018 and 2022 respectively) and revisions to zoning and

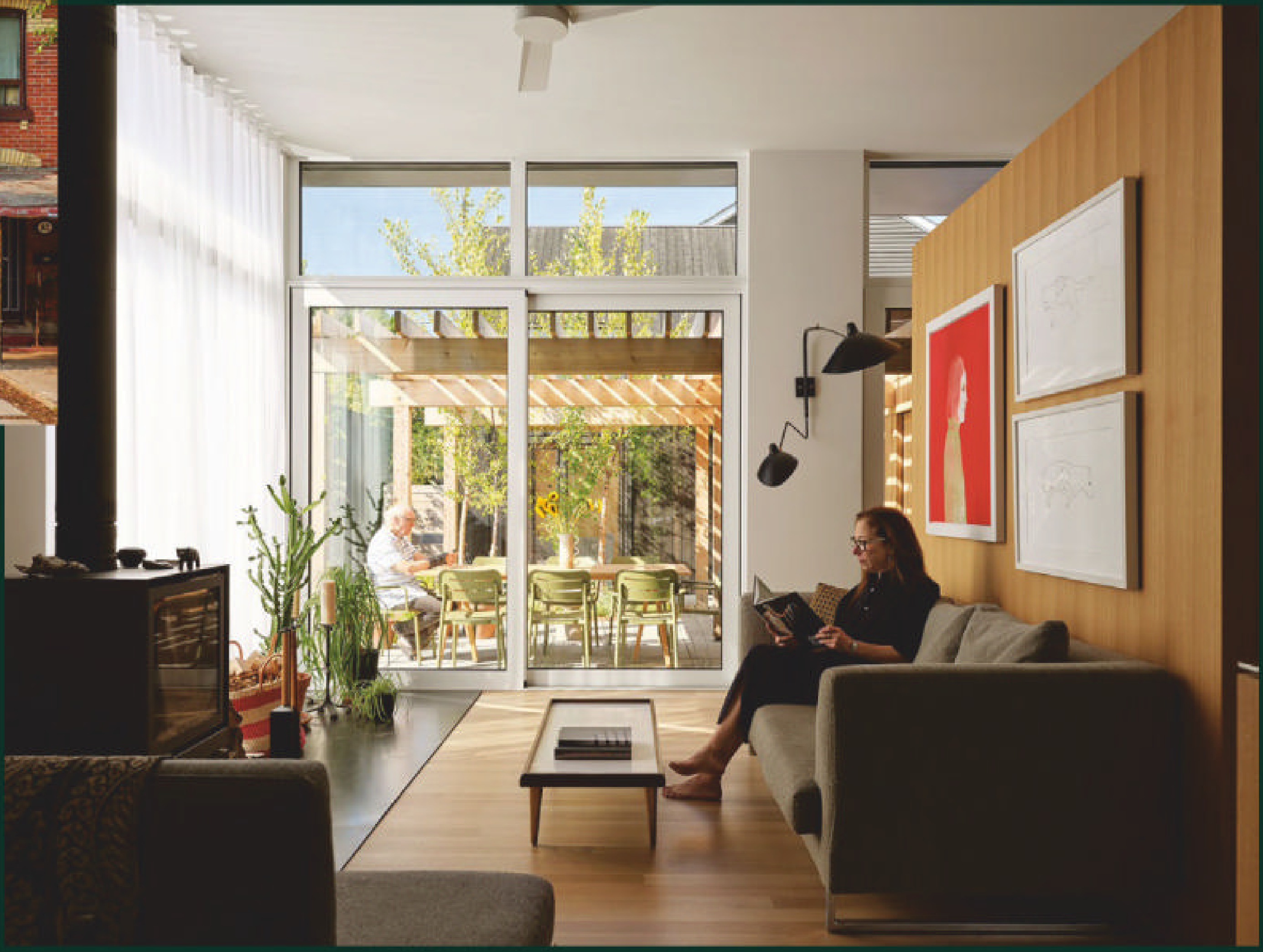


RIGHT: With the bedroom tucked into the laneway suite, the main floor of the multiplex serves as a living and dining space that promotes entertaining and doubles as a casual home office. Light fixtures are by A-N-D (above kitchen counter) and Tom Dixon (above dining table from Mjölk).

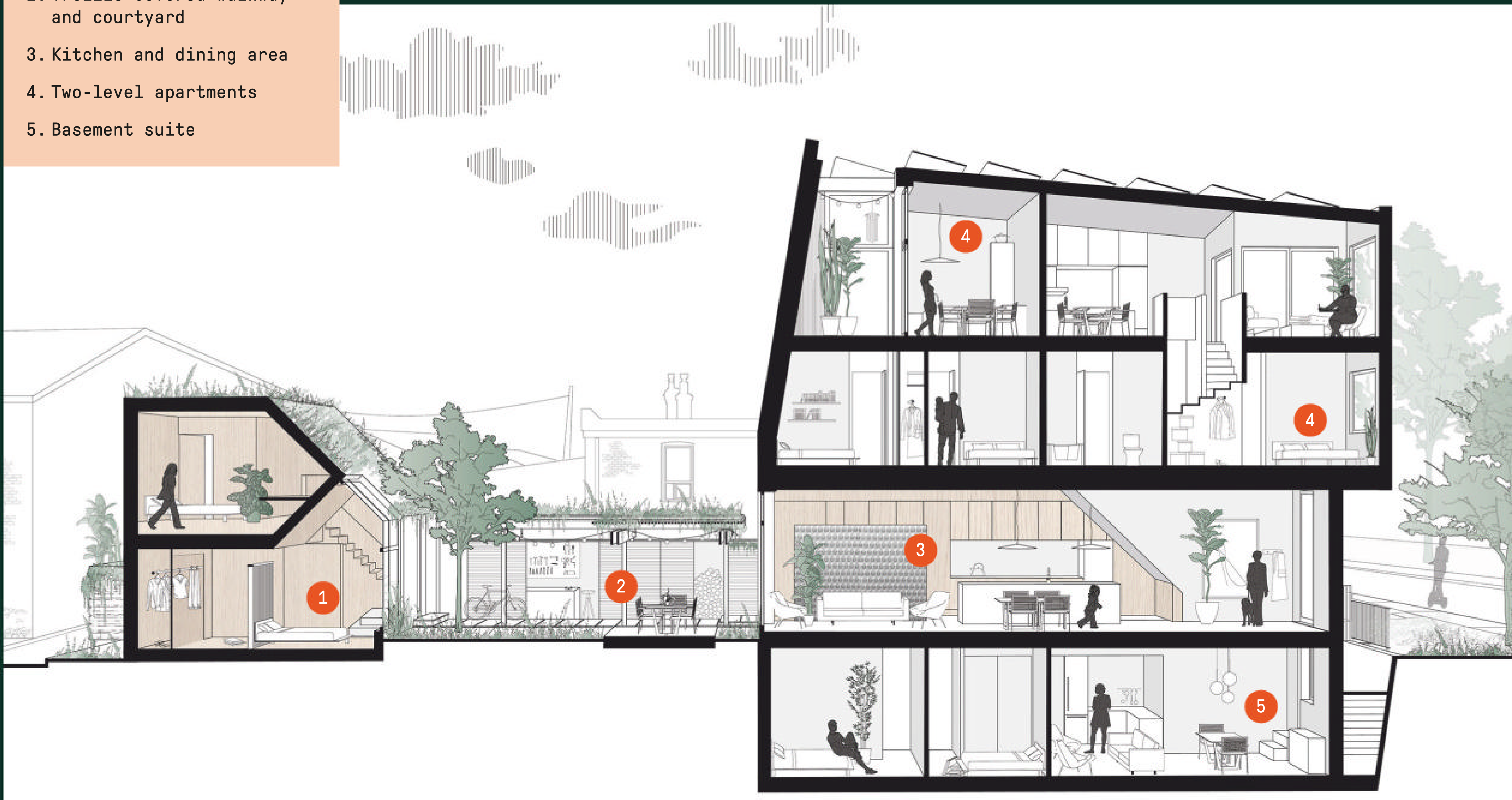


ABOVE: Clad in clay tiles, the multiplex building riffs on the texture, materiality and visual rhythm of Toronto's residential vernaculars while introducing a distinctive new presence.

BELOW: Expansive windows (by Division 8) and a trellised courtyard support Levitt and Goodman's indoor-outdoor lifestyle. "There's tons of bees, moths and butterflies that are constantly moving around the fir and pines. We have also seen foxes and rabbits," says Levitt.



1. Laneway suite (bedroom)
2. Trellis-covered walkway and courtyard
3. Kitchen and dining area
4. Two-level apartments
5. Basement suite



planning that permit city-wide multiplex housing — as part of the Expanding Housing Options in Neighbourhoods (EHON) program initiated in 2023. But legality is one thing; making the leap from citizen to citizen developer is another story.

As Tuf Lab's Michael Piper puts it, ReHousing intends to bridge the gap. "I remember I was looking to buy a home and create a unit for my in-laws," he says. "And as an architect, it's pretty easy to look at a building or a layout and think, 'I know exactly what I want to do.' But most of us aren't architects — and folks don't necessarily know where to start. So the idea with the ReHousing tool kit is that it's almost like having an architect in your pocket." It starts with simple principles, says Samantha Eby. "It's about imparting our design skills, and our experience in thinking about things like phasing a project, to a wider public," she explains. "So if you're installing a new kitchen, for example, it's worthwhile knowing that you shouldn't place it along an exterior wall. But if you really have to, then make sure that you insulate the pipes." The design catalogue applies to projects of a variety of sizes, from simple renovations and small additions to lot splits and laneway suites.

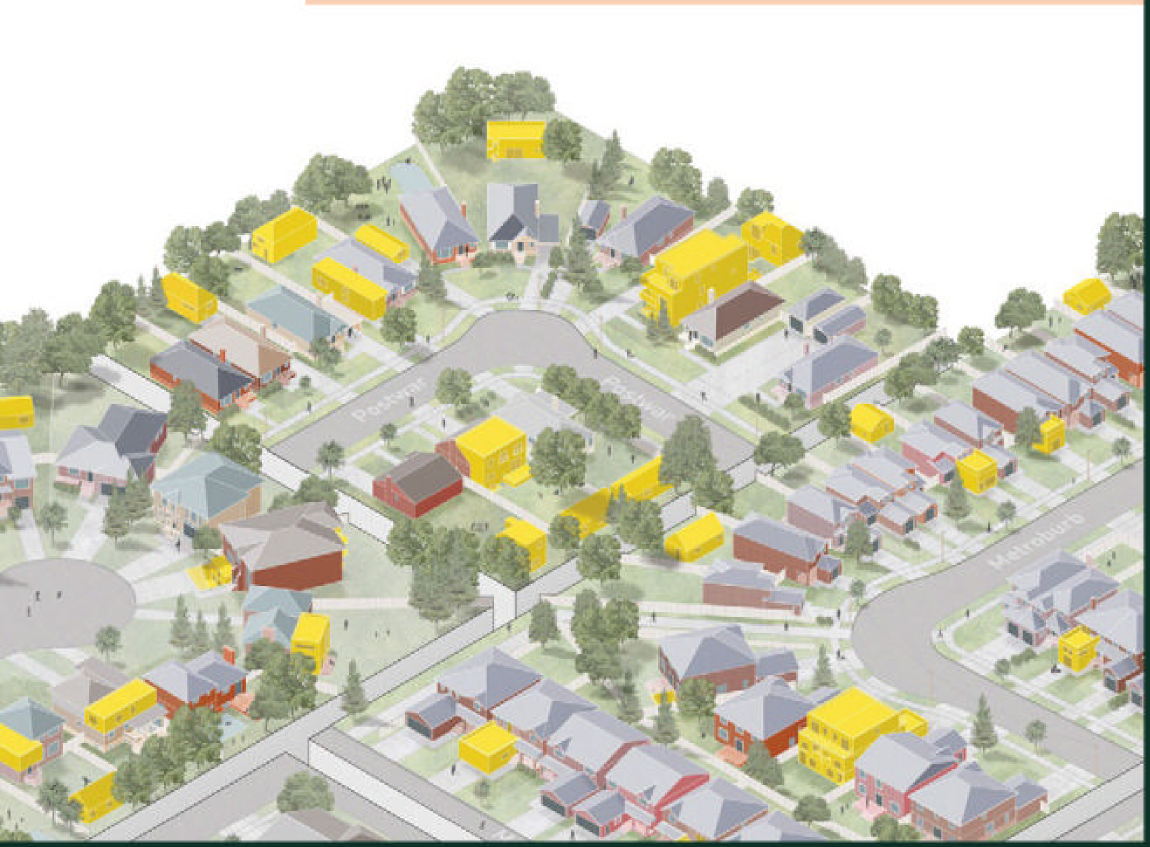
As a new-build multiplex, Ulster House sits at the most ambitious end of the scale. Having broken ground well before the EHON program ostensibly paved the way for new multiplexes across Toronto, it faced a bevy of hurdles. For starters, the laneway unit's form reflects the City of Toronto's dogmatic commitment to maintaining an angular plane in secondary suites. In lieu of a simple and efficient rectilinear box, the second floor of the smaller volume is reduced in size, decreasing floor area and increasing construction cost, in order to mitigate its

> *The idea of the citizen developer came from a bottom-up response to creating more housing.*

ABOVE: While the angular form of the laneway house is a response to planning regulations, Levitt and Goodman leveraged the constraints to create a generous skylight and a tranquil, sun-filled bedroom.

RE-HOUSING

Anchored by growing — and increasingly comprehensive — construction and design catalogues, the ReHousing program gives property owners a tool kit to plan and phase renovations and additions that modestly increase density in residential neighbourhoods.



visual prominence. More fundamentally, the larger three-storey volume necessitated two exit stairs, reducing usable floor area in a project where spatial efficiency was paramount. While seemingly minor, such regulatory mandates complicate the logistical — and financial — feasibility of multiplex development.

These challenges were expected — and deftly resolved. But an unanticipated and costly roadblock emerged once Ulster House was all but complete: It took months for Toronto Hydro to supply the number of breaker panels required and then hook them up to power (the home's HVAC is all-electric, in line with Levitt and Goodman's desire for a zero-carbon operating project). Why the delay? The request was "non-standard" and precipitated an indefinitely long process. And so, although the municipality is actively encouraging the development of new multiplex housing, there was a lack of policy cohesion at the public utility level. On top of the months of lost rent, the cost to Levitt and Goodman came in at $75,000. "Why would the City encourage us to build all of this stuff and not have it aligned with Hydro so they're actually ready to roll it out?" asks Goodman.

As multiplexes are being built in modest numbers, a handful of similar developments have faced their own obstacles. On nearby Shaw Street, for example, fellow citizen developer Nigel Churcher came up against "a long list of minor variances" (according to the *Globe and Mail*), and each of his four units required its own gas, electricity and water connections, along with a specialized ventilation system for the property. Even the City of Toronto's own definition of a multiplex remains dodgy; municipal guidelines allow for fourplexes in semi-detached buildings, yet in upscale Bedford Park, a proposal to split a pair of neighbouring semi-detached homes into multiple suites was met with surprising resistance by planning staff. According to a 2024 staff report, the fact that the two properties share a wall means they amount to a single apartment building, which is not permitted under zoning rules. Taken together, such regulatory uncertainties invite a reconsideration of just how "legal" multiplexes really are.

This bureaucratic resistance to change has deeper socio-economic roots. As North American governments divested from building and managing public housing in the late 20th century, an increasingly complex apparatus emerged to govern — and constrain — multi-family development. Restrictive zoning, outdated building codes, empirically dubious fire safety rules and other impediments added up to a recipe for languishing housing supply and skyrocketing prices. Across Toronto and the continent, it remains far easier to build a colossal single-family mansion than a multi-unit property of the same scale.

On a cultural level, this state of affairs changed how we think about our cities and our homes. "As soon as housing became an investment tool, the ability to do an informal transformation of a single-family home into a multi-unit dwelling became restrictive," says Levitt. "With so much wealth and net worth now tied up in real estate, there's been a flip from neighbours offering to help you renovate your garage to them calling the municipality to report that you're working without a permit. One of the reasons that's happening is because so much of their own money is invested in the property — they're afraid of incurring any kind of risk."

In an era of real estate wealth, a prevalent trend sees multi-unit buildings across North American cities — many of which were originally built as stately houses — converted back into luxury single-family homes. While such transformations are generally accepted and even rewarded, tenants and landlords undertaking the opposite project of informally converting houses into multi-unit dwellings stand to face municipal reprisal, and this in turn creates a grey market housing landscape that's all but invisible to the public and political consciousness. In its own small way, the ReHousing project is bringing such typologies and living arrangements into the civic spotlight — and into the language of civic bureaucracy. "One of the really interesting things that I hope can emerge from this whole conversation is if, for example, the City could consider another amnesty (like it did 15 years ago), and offer landlords the opportunity to come forward and work together with them to safely and affordably convert illegal rooming houses into multiplexes," says Levitt. "ReHousing can offer a tool kit to do so with a variety of options."

Renovations, additions and new multiplexes can gradually reintroduce necessary density into residential neighbourhoods, whether for private profit or social good. "These typologies are all basically ownership-agnostic," Levitt says. Already, ReHousing's tool kit and Levitt and Goodman's project have elicited interest, including from private homeowners looking for rental income and community land trusts searching for affordable entry points into the property market. Given the scale of the housing crisis, however, it'll probably never add up to enough on its own; even 5,000 Ulster Houses would only deliver a maximum of 25,000 new homes. Yet these new buildings can change how we think about Toronto's neighbourhoods, their heritage and their future. There has always been another city here. We just have to look carefully to see it. **AZ**

BELOW: The Ulster House interiors juxtapose bright wood with dramatic monochrome tile, making for a rigorously simple yet dynamic material palette.

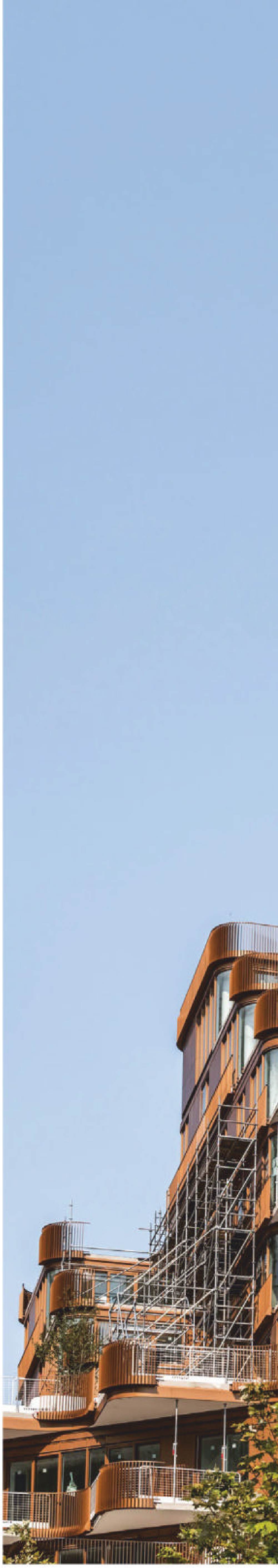
WITH ITS EAST BAYFRONT
TRIO OF BUILDINGS, THE DANISH
FIRM EVOLVES THE SHAPE OF
RESIDENTIAL AND COMMERCIAL
DEVELOPMENT ON THE WATERFRONT

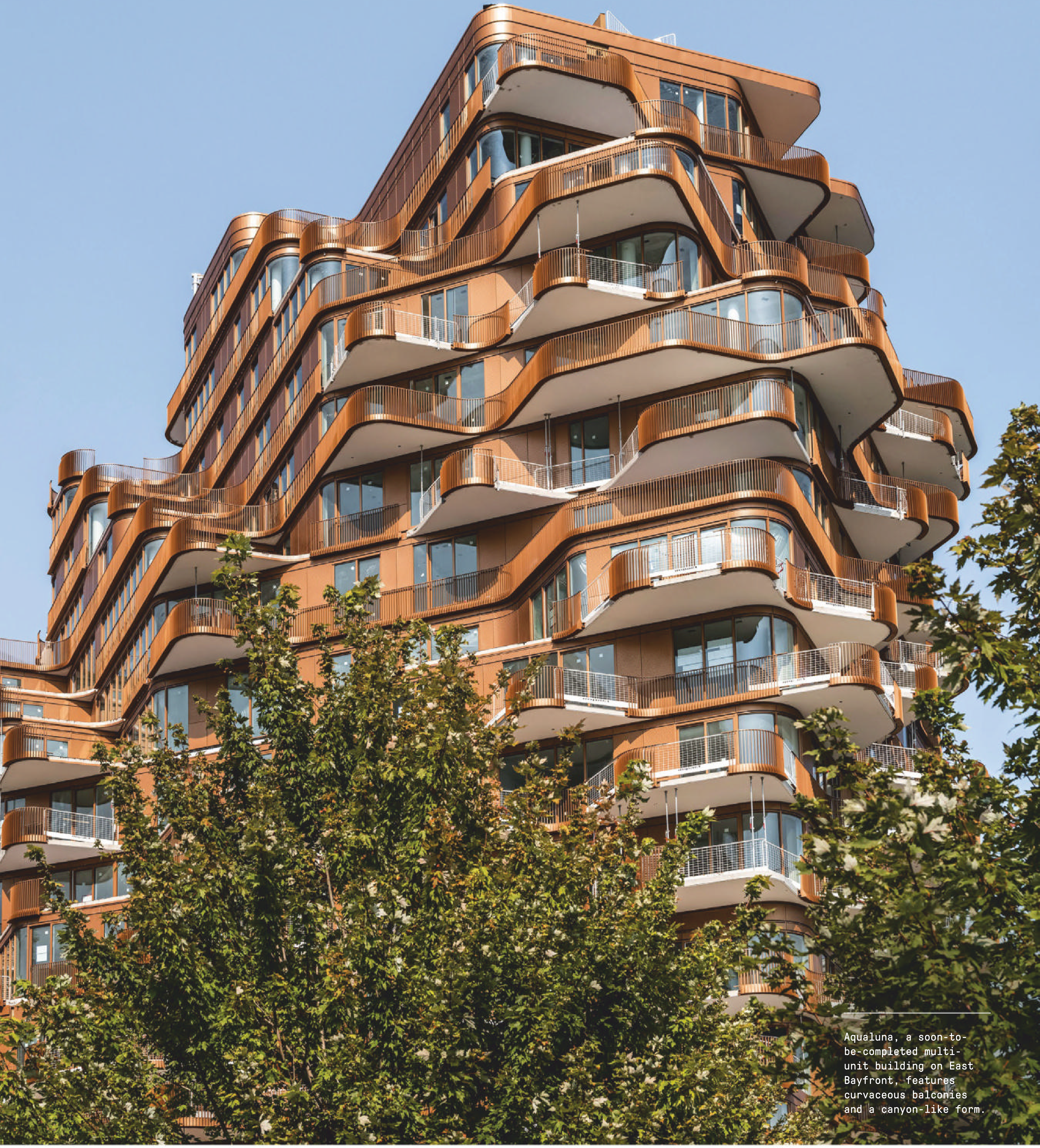
STORY BY
JOHN LORINC

PHOTOGRAPHY BY
RASMUS HJORTSHØJ

3XN TAKES (A CORNER OF) TORONTO

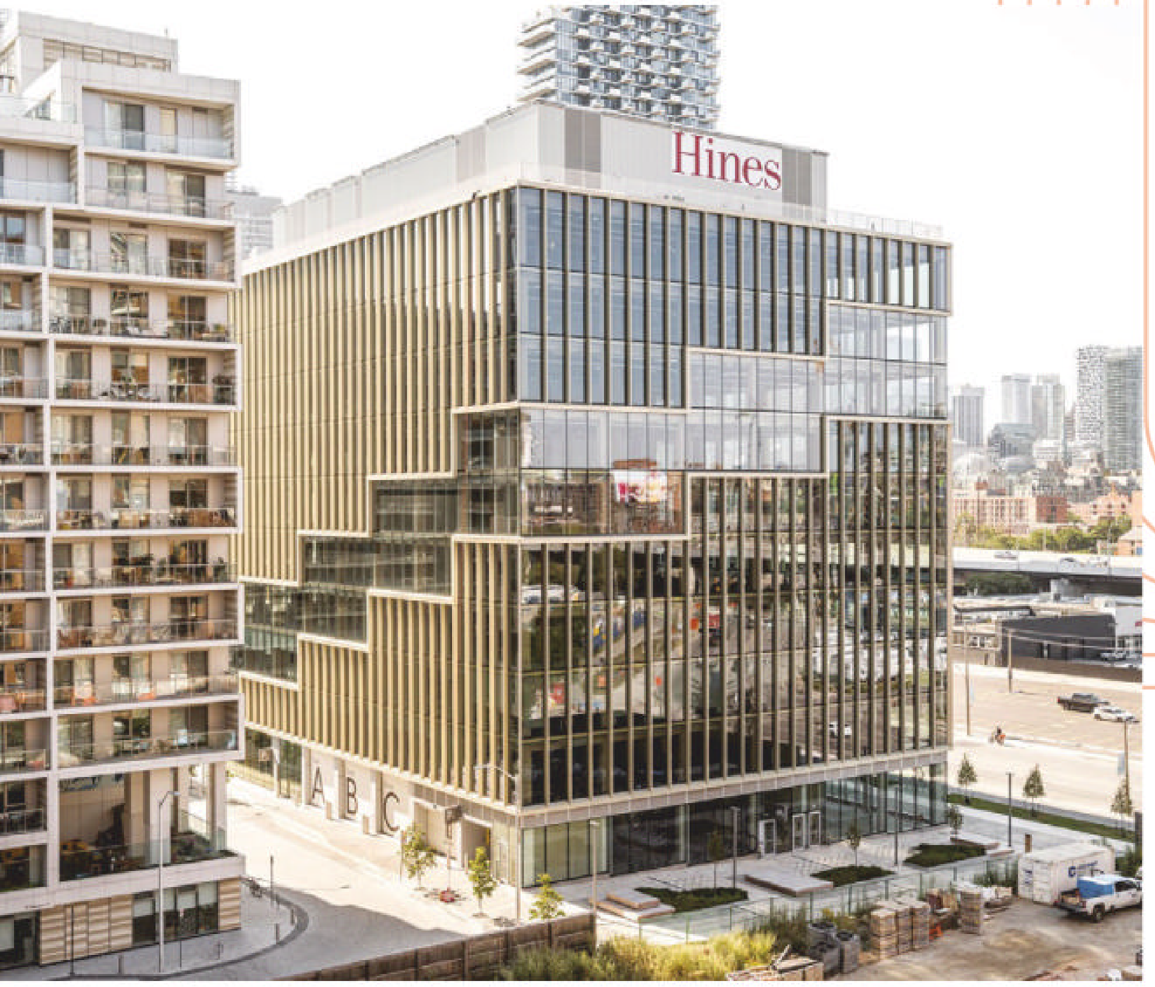
PRETTY MUCH SINCE ITS INCEPTION, Waterfront Toronto (WT) made its home on one of the upper floors of a 1990s po-mo tower at the foot of Bay Street. Long and low-ceilinged, the unprepossessing space was bisected by an enlargeable boardroom and had all the charm of an accountant's office. In January 2024, however, the public agency — which has spent the past 24 years redeveloping Toronto's brownfield waterfront on behalf of all three levels of government — moved to a new headquarters: the T3 Bayside building, situated on a strategic site in the midst of one of its first large precincts to be built out, dubbed East Bayfront. Shorthand for "Timber, Talent and Technology," T3 is a 10-storey heavy timber structure with double-volume spaces, open-concept bays and an abundance of green features.



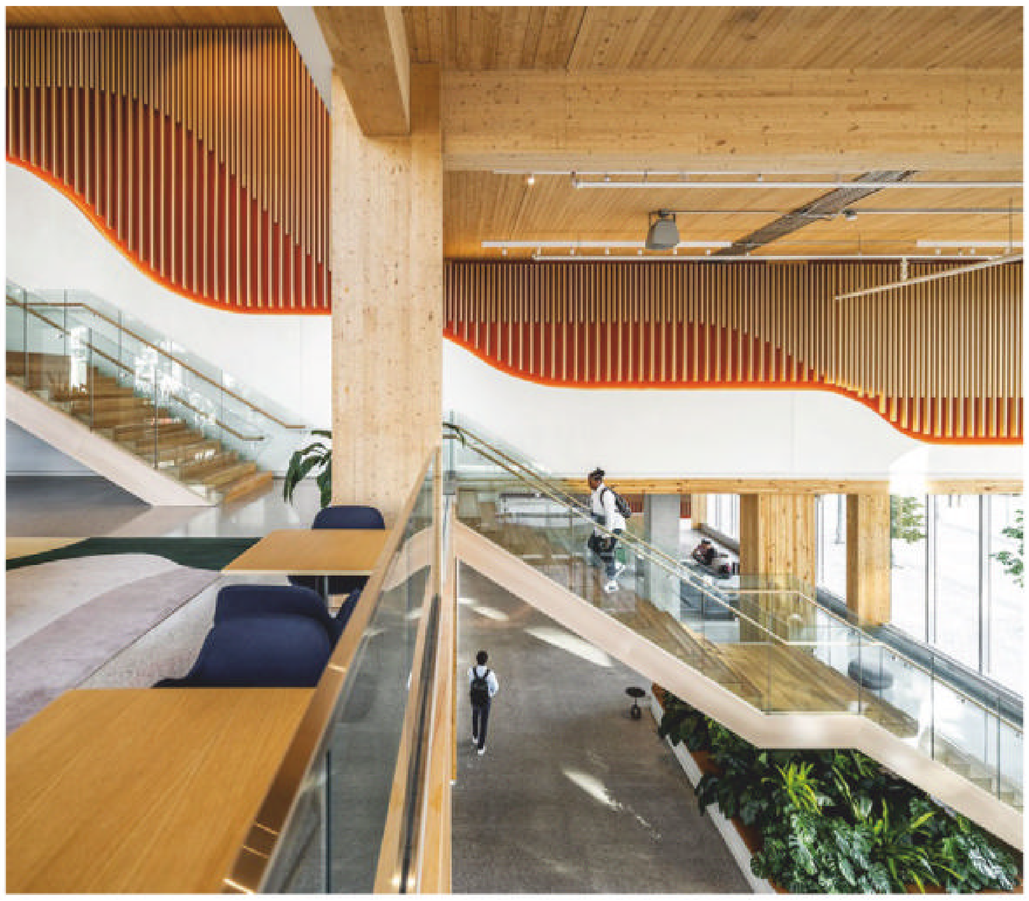


Aqualuna, a soon-to-be-completed multi-unit building on East Bayfront, features curvaceous balconies and a canyon-like form.

T3 IS A GRID, AND YOU CAN SEE IT FROM THE EXTERIOR, AS WELL AS HOW THESE SPACES LOOK AS YOU ARE TRAVELLING UP. THERE'S NO DOUBT THIS IS A TIMBER BUILDING.



Waterfront Toronto's offices are now located in the new T3 building (above), a tall mass timber structure with a zigzagging facade detail that makes the interior – including the double-height tenant lounge (below) – fully visible.



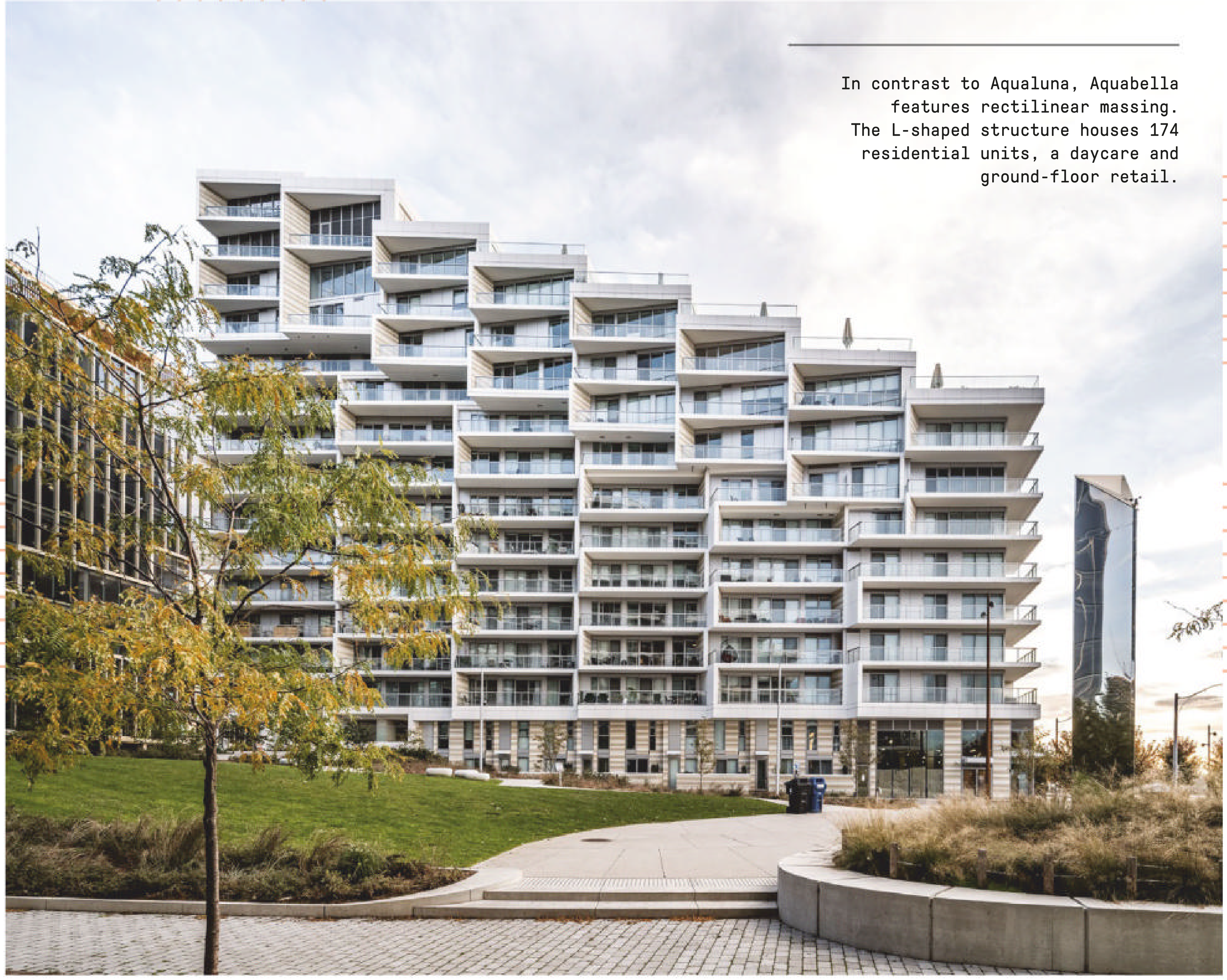
Christopher Glaisek, WT's chief planning and design officer, says the staff were immediately taken by the "biophilic" qualities of their new digs. "The warmth of the wood is just undeniable," he told me recently. "Everybody feels it. It humanizes the space, in a way. It makes it feel more intimate, more personal. Everybody loves to touch the columns." Glaisek continues: "The quality of the light is actually enhanced by bouncing off all this nice orangey-yellow wood." Since the pandemic abated, WT staff come into the office three days a week.

T3, which cost about $100 million to build, brings about 24,000 square metres of new workspace to what has evolved into a genuinely mixed-use area. Hines, the property manager and master developer for Bayside, will erect a twin next door (also by Eastern Construction). Founded in the 1950s, Hines is a real estate powerhouse, with US$93 billion in assets under management spread across 31 countries. Its T3-branded brick-and-beam-style buildings can be found in several major centres.

But this one is special. Hines selected 3XN, the Danish architectural studio, to design it. The building is part of a trio, along with two striking residential projects also conceived by 3XN (both by Hines's residential developer partner, Tridel). Together, they exemplify Waterfront Toronto's latest ambitions, both in terms of cutting-edge low-carbon architecture and ambitious urban design. The mini-campus of sculptural mid-rise Scandinavian architecture surrounds an intimate green space, all of it situated at a prime East Bayfront spot with front row seats overlooking the Parliament Street slip, the Keating Channel and the newly naturalized Lower Don River.

In the late 2010s, when Hines first selected 3XN to work on the Bayside development in East Bayfront, the Copenhagen-based firm did not have a North American presence; Toronto would be the first. Yet 3XN had already built a formidable international reputation, with major office, residential and institutional projects in cities like Berlin, London and Sydney. Founded in Aarhus, Denmark, in 1986, the firm is known for its sculptural parametric designs, the environmental performance of its projects, and close attention to ergonomic features and user experience.

When 3XN senior partner Audun Opdal and his team began considering the design for the firm's two residential buildings — Aquabella and Aqualuna, designed in 2015



In contrast to Aqualuna, Aquabella features rectilinear massing. The L-shaped structure houses 174 residential units, a daycare and ground-floor retail.

and 2017 — they quickly encountered one of the preconditions of waterfront development in Toronto: Community amenities would have to be woven directly into the fabric of this new neighbourhood.

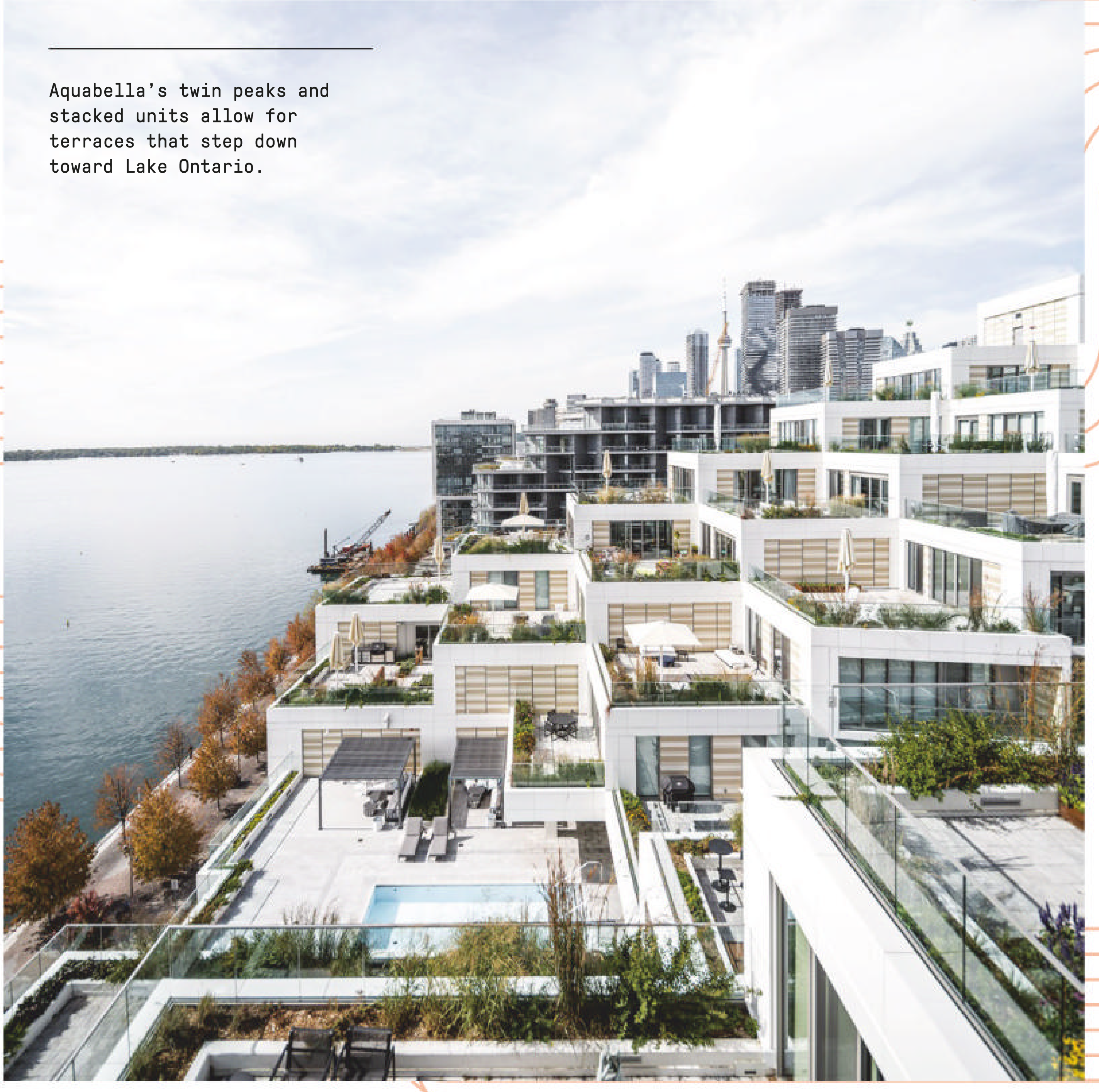
Besides ground-floor retail, they also had to find a way to incorporate a 62-spot daycare centre onto the inward-facing grade level of Aquabella — something that isn't especially common in Denmark. The articulated L-shaped structure is both oriented toward the lake, with stepped terraces and a bit of a Mediterranean vibe, and also opens up onto a small park (a jewel of a space designed by SWA/Balsley with Scott Torrance Landscape Architect), which required 3XN's team to consider the microclimates where young children and parents would gather. "We were quite interested in bringing some of the learning from Copenhagen, but there was also this curiousness about these buildings in Toronto and how this kind of residential living can start to inform architecture."

But as the 3XN team turned its attention to the second building, Aqualuna, Opdal noted on the master plan that the two residential complexes were to encircle another building: an affordable housing project. "It didn't receive any views or much sunlight at all because of its surrounding buildings," he says. "They were all flat and it was tucked in." (A much earlier version of WT's precinct plan called for a school and community centre on the block that Aqualuna now occupies.)

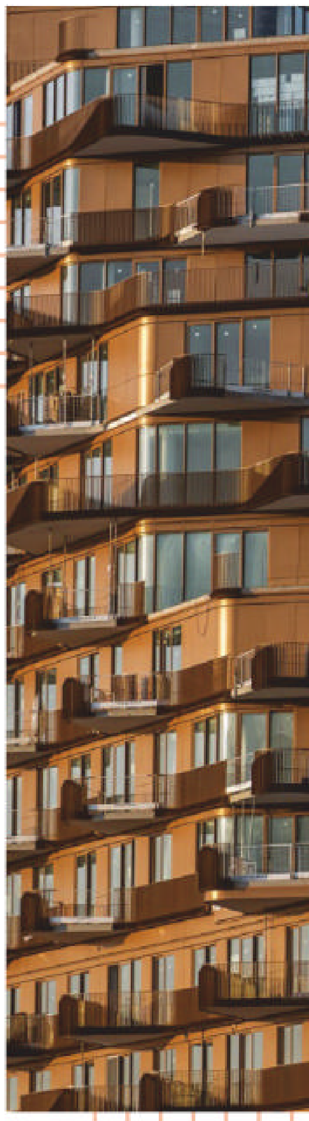
The result, in part, is the remarkable configuration of the "valley" that distinguishes the skyline of Aqualuna (as Opdal describes it), which rises into a pair of peaks that let views and sunlight in to the smaller affordable housing project that will be situated behind it. In contrast to the geometrical elegance of Aquabella, Aqualuna's exterior features undulating balconies and bands of coppery ceramic panels. Waterfront Toronto's Glaisek points out that initially, wood cladding was considered for Aqualuna's exterior, but Tridel was concerned about how it would age. "The ceramic panels are intended to evoke wood because they're wood tones."

Both residential buildings, as well as another Tridel condo just to the west, combine to create a wavy topography at the eastern end of the East Bayfront. The effect mirrors the work of another pioneering Danish firm, Bjarke Ingels Group, and its King Toronto residences, which are still under construction on King Street West. "Aquabella is very much this idea about terracing and stepping," Glaisek says. "This is an architectural form that we're seeing more and more of…It creates all these amazing outdoor spaces for the residents, which hopefully animates the waterfront too, because you can see people out on their terraces, enjoying the water."

They also serve, perhaps unintentionally, as a reminder of the very boxy and conspicuously corporate built form that has characterized much of the first tranche of East Bayfront projects, including the Corus head office (by Toronto's Diamond Schmitt), the first of two George Brown College buildings (by Stantec and KPMB Architects) and even the Aqualina condo (a fourth Tridel structure on the Bayside site, by Miami-based Arquitectonica), which abuts Sherbourne Common. Opdal draws attention to another important, although subtle, point of comparison between Aqualuna and Toronto's garden-variety condos, with their perfunctory balconies. Besides the distinctive shape and spaciousness of Aqualuna's balconies, 3XN relied



Aquabella's twin peaks and stacked units allow for terraces that step down toward Lake Ontario.



on specially designed "thermal breaks" to minimize energy loss through the slab floor — an endemic issue in newer Toronto high-rises that contributes greatly to poor energy performance. "When we started, there was little culture for actually dealing with this in many of the residential buildings," he says. "We spent time understanding how we can actually cast in insulation between the balconies and the internal slabs to make sure that there's less thermal bridging between the two."

`In 2007, 3XN's partners` set up something of an internal think tank, which has since evolved into the independent consultancy GXN. Its interdisciplinary teams of engineers, architects, social scientists and more carry out both field and applied research on a wide range of design-related topics, among them innovative building materials, circularity and behavioural design. The findings are then applied to 3XN's projects — including those at East Bayfront.

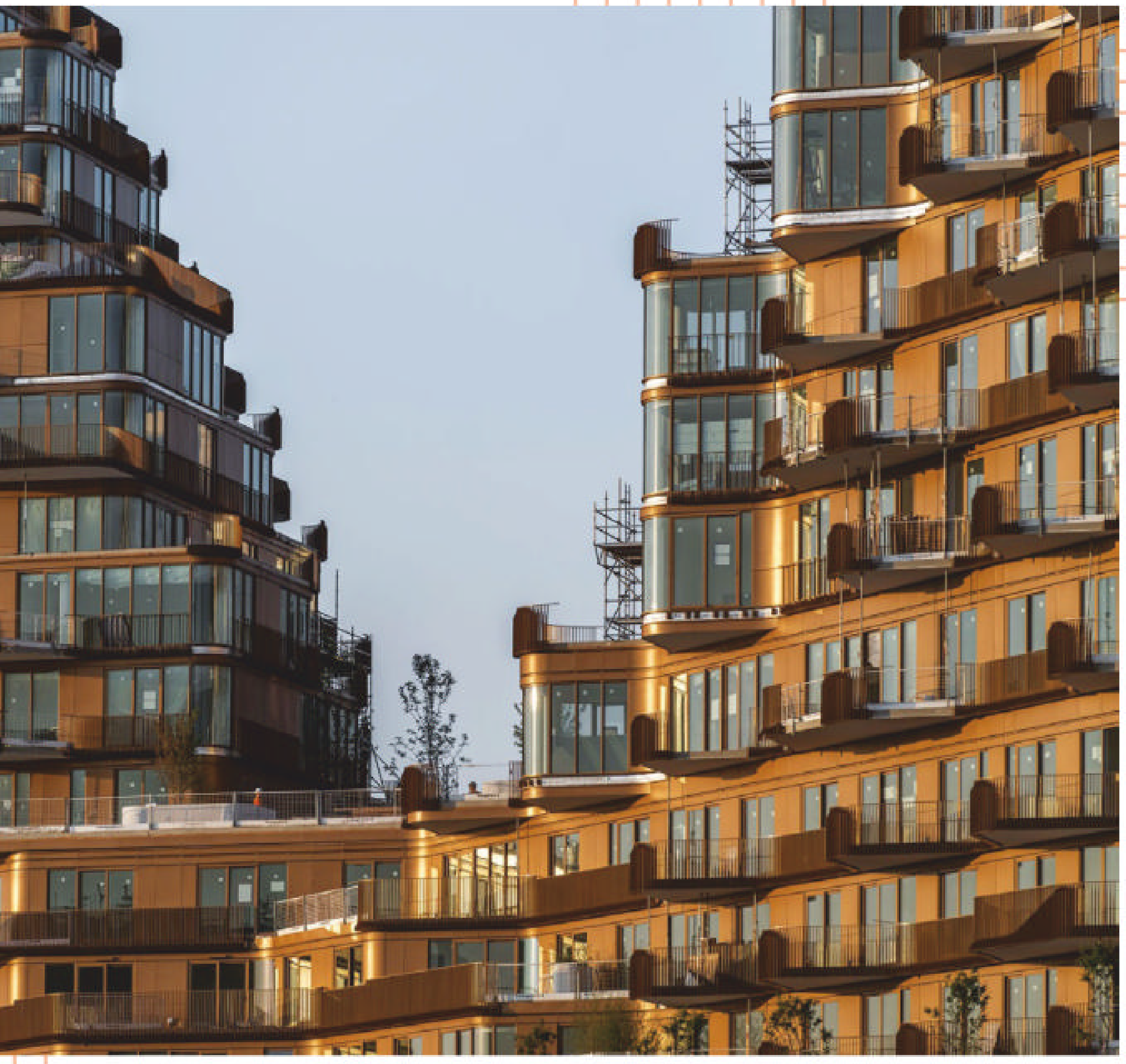
Susan Carruth, a partner at GXN, tells the story of how "old-fashioned" field studies informed the design of one of 3XN's marquee buildings, the International Olympic Committee's headquarters in Lausanne, Switzerland. Prior to this commission, the firm had designed a school with a broad circular staircase in the middle of the atrium, the idea being that students would congregate on the steps. "We'd hoped this was connecting more than just floors, that it would be connecting people as well, as a social space," she explains. When the school opened, Carruth's researchers went back to see if their design intention had borne out. As it transpired, most of the anticipated interaction was actually taking place on the staircase's relatively small landings, which tended to get quite busy and crowded.

Based on that learning, she says, 3XN adapted its design for the IOC headquarters by "supersizing" the landings on a similar broad central staircase. "You have to walk around [those landings] to go up the next flight of stairs," Carruth explains. "They're not efficient stairs: They're designed to be socially effective."

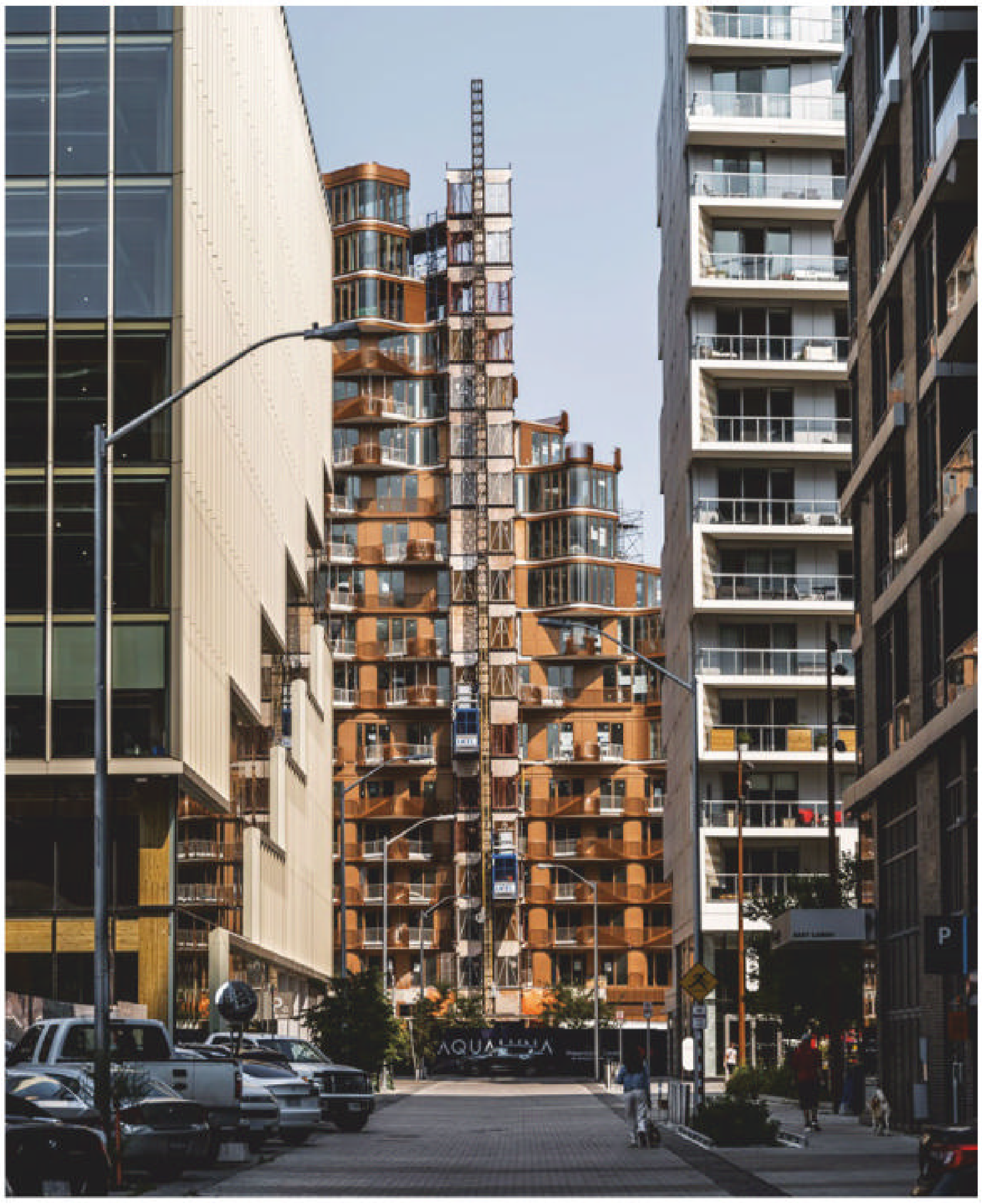
Observing the way people use a completed building, including through the use of sensors, is an ideal approach to informing future designs, but this kind of research is not always possible because so many projects are for private uses. When GXN does have the opportunity, its researchers look at materiality, acoustics and "proxemics" — the physical distance between people within a given space, which determines "not only where you feel comfortable or where you feel your space is being intruded upon," Carruth explains, "but also how far away you are before you can recognize someone, or before you can communicate."

In the case of 3XN's East Bayfront trio, Carruth points out that on a brownfield site, "architecture can be really helpful through what you might call 'addressability,'" citing the distinctiveness of the two condo projects. "You can describe what makes it distinct and not just a generic block. You can bring something sensorial about it, something memorable. You can talk about what's happening at the ground floor, but that will change over time. In that sense, architecture has a job to do, to communicate something and to make itself memorable and addressable."

The most obviously memorable feature of T3 specifically is that it is a fairly tall timber building — at the time it was proposed, the 42-metre tall T3 was the highest tall timber structure in Canada, but others have since surpassed it — with a distinctive stair-shaped opening that rises along the sides of its glass curtain wall. The entire



The 16-storey Aqualuna (above) houses 240 luxury condo units, a large sixth-floor amenity terrace and a pool. The trio of buildings — T3, Aqualuna and Aquabella — create an evocative ensemble in the East Bayfront district (below).



building has a certain transparency that showcases its cross-laminated timber beams and posts at grade. As Opdal says, "It's a grid, and you can see it from the exterior, as well as how these kinds of spaces look when you're travelling up. There's no doubt this is a timber building." (Originally, 3XN's design called for a few additional floors, plus a podium for parking that could be converted into office space at some later date. WT's design review panel vetoed the above-grade parking, and the additional cost of constructing below-grade parking meant removing the terraced upper levels.)

As happened with the staircase in the IOC headquarters, 3XN has applied its experience with T3 Bayside to other projects, Opdal says. "Interestingly enough, we just completed another timber building here in Denmark. It's a headquarters for two robot companies. The learnings from T3 in Toronto, we brought with us back to Denmark."

Glaisek points out that one of the noteworthy features of Aqualuna, which is situated on the edge of the Parliament Street slip, is that it will both enjoy — and enable, due to its distinctive shape — commanding views of what comes next for Waterfront Toronto.

The 4.85-hectare precinct immediately to the east, known as Quayside, was once intended to be the home base for Sidewalk Labs' smart city experiment but has since been reimagined much more thoughtfully. It will include one of Canada's largest tall timber buildings, a 0.8-hectare forested green space, a rooftop urban farm and more than 800 affordable housing units, with Dream Unlimited and Great Gulf Group as lead developers.

"I feel like there is this shift that happens in East Bayfront from somewhat more 'safe' design to more interesting designs as you move east," Glaisek observes. "I'm hoping that that's going to take another leap forward when you go north and into Quayside, with the promise of another whole evolution of architectural expression."

But Paul Bedford, who chairs WT's design review panel and wrote the waterfront secondary plan in the early 2000s when he was the city's chief planner, cautions that much depends on the quality of the urban spaces that frame the increasingly daring architecture created by firms like 3XN. From its inception, WT had a mandate to create a public realm that would attract development, and that formula has been borne out. He points to the new waterside esplanade that extends the entire length of the East Bayfront as a vivid example of high-minded and inviting urban design. "The thing that I think is most stunning, almost on the entire waterfront, is the promenade from Sugar Beach all the way down," he says. "When you look at the double row of trees and walk that whole thing all the way down to Parliament Street, it's pretty special."

3XN's two Tridel projects, which are pitched at the upper end of the condo market, both benefit from and enhance this public space, which affords a view of the inner harbour that simply didn't exist until about 15 years ago. However, T3 and the other new office and institutional buildings that line the northern edge of the East Bayfront precinct, which is demarcated by a wide stretch of Queens Quay East, face a more daunting task from an urban design perspective. As Bedford says, that roadway is barren and windswept, and the long-planned light-rail transit (LRT) that will someday traverse it remains unfunded. "We'll know over time how Queens Quay evolves if we ever get the LRT funded," he says. That stretch "is better than it was, but it's still kind of a dog's breakfast and doesn't hang together as a unified street."

While T3's porous design does seek to address all four sides, including the building's extensive frontage along Queens Quay, time will tell how its occupants will engage with its immediate surroundings. As Susan Carruth observes of deindustrialized precincts like East Bayfront, "These places were originally built not for people but for machines, so bringing in a fine grain is a challenge. Probably more than anything, it's about turning it from a space into a place." **AZ**

HACKING THE SYSTEM

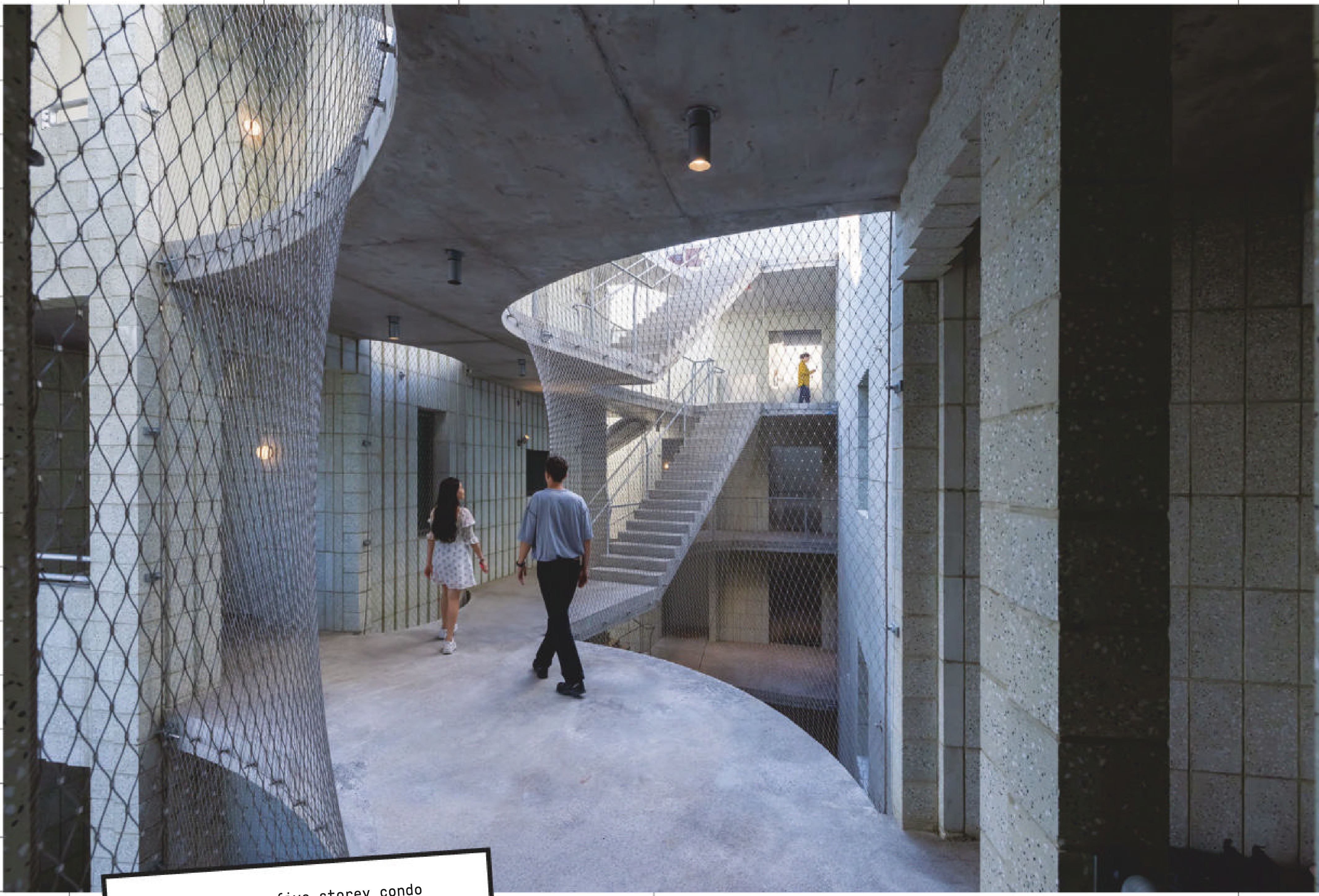
How **SO – IL** is rewriting NYC's architectural source code to reframe multi-family housing around the human experience

BY ERIC MUTRIE

+ By this point in the digital age, we're accustomed to blaming "the algorithm" for the eerily prescient ads served on social media, or the embarrassing movies that streaming services automatically queue up based on our past viewing history.

Brooklyn architecture firm SO – IL has a different bone to pick with big data. In the eyes of founders Florian Idenburg and Jing Liu, opaque number-crunching also dictates what type of housing gets built, as spreadsheet-obsessed banks and overly regulated planning departments favour safe investments that result in a loop of bland, boxy sameness. Over the past few years, SO – IL has been pushing back against this paint-by-numbers design while inventing more creative (yet nevertheless lucrative) solutions. In the process, it is imagining a different form of urban domesticity — one ruled less by traditional economic formulas and more by moments of genuine connection.

PHOTOS BY ANNA BAUER (PORTRAIT); IWAN BAAN, COURTESY OF SO – IL (450 WARREN)



At 450 WARREN, a five-storey condo building in Brooklyn, SO – IL skipped the dark, double-loaded corridor you'd typically find in multi-unit housing in favour of winding concrete bridges that look out to a central courtyard through wire-mesh netting.

IN *NEW YORK CITY, ALL ROADS LEAD TO WALL STREET.* "When we started a studio here, we committed to being in a place where markets build everything," says Florian Idenburg, who co-founded SO – IL alongside his life partner, Jing Liu, in 2008 after the two met while working at SANAA in Tokyo. Sure enough, SO – IL's best-known NYC project to date, the Amant arts campus in Brooklyn, exists at the perfect intersection of creativity and cash: The cluster of galleries and studio spaces was funded by Lonti Ebers, a wealthy arts patron.

Unfortunately, convincing the real estate market to finance that same level of architectural finesse is no easy sell. "Housing is kind of the cornerstone of any good architecture practice, because it's really the foundation of our built environment," says Liu. "So, from the beginning, we tried to do multi-family housing. But we learned from our colleagues and peers in New York that it is impossible." The challenge, Idenburg explains, lies in a simple fact: "Developers like Excel sheets, not plans." Add building codes and zoning restrictions into the mix and you end up with very limited outcomes. "There is this super-tight algorithm that governs everything that people do in New York City," says Liu. "It's no wonder that no architects do housing."

Yet somehow, SO – IL has pulled it off, gradually reimagining select corners of Brooklyn with new ideas about life in the city. In 2022, the studio completed 450 Warren, an 18-unit condo building in Boerum Hill. Three follow-up projects are underway: 144 Vanderbilt Avenue, 9 Chapel Street and 450 Union Street — all (like 450 Warren) built by the boutique developer Tankhouse. "We try to prove that even within the realities of the market, it might be possible to push back against some of the mechanistic forces that go on to shape the way we live," says Idenburg.

In that spirit, it might be easiest to define 450 Warren by contrasting it with its neighbours. "There are two types of housing in Brooklyn: brownstones and towers," Idenburg continues. SO – IL and Tankhouse envisioned a hybrid: A multi-unit infill that would move circulation from internal hallways to the building exterior, giving each unit a pseudo–front stoop. In place of balcony railings, this circulation is enclosed by mesh netting. Unlike in other modern residential developments, there is no physical doorman, and there are no luxury amenities, like dog spas. And, rather than a flat, boxy shell, the building is a series of vertical, masonry-clad volumes pushed and pulled into a tiered arrangement.

Look at it through a banker's lens, and you might even see a row of spreadsheet columns. That's a coincidence — but there's some truth to the comparison, too. As Idenburg and Liu explain, if you want to bend the algorithm to your will, you need to understand the underlying source code. That way, you can plug in radical ideas while still getting the system to return the desired financial value. In other words, even non-formulaic architecture has its own formula.

Here is SO – IL's:

A1 =SUM(2012+2016)

BUILD ON YOUR PAST SUCCESS

+ ***SO – IL'S ENTRY POINT*** into the NYC housing market was a 2012 proposal for a building on East 27th Street dubbed tiNY, which would have packed 96 identical micro-units (each measuring 22 square metres) into a 17-storey tower. Idenburg and Liu designed it as part of a New York Department of Housing Preservation and Development competition held during the Bloomberg administration, and they admit that its salient concept — solving affordability by making housing even smaller — was controversial.

Building on ideas initially explored in SO – IL's 2010 concept for a housing development in Greece, the proposal also served as a preview of things to come, particularly in the way that it addressed the threshold between indoor and outdoor space. "Lately, the more privatized interior has been pushing out in its incessant desire to grow, and absorbing all this formerly communal space," Liu says. "This also manifests in how building envelopes get designed: They become just this thin line between the city and inside." SO – IL's response, articulated in tiNY and in the projects that have followed it, has been to reintroduce a sense of depth, and to do away with dark inner hallways in favour of open circulation that feels more akin to a typical residential street. Units in tiNY would have sat in the building's core, sandwiched between balconies on one end and a single open circulation corridor on the other.

The project caught the attention of Mexico's Imuvi Development, a municipal agency that approached SO – IL in 2016 with an assignment. In Léon, about a five-hour drive northwest of Mexico City, urban sprawl has meant that utility and transportation networks must be expanded ever outward. Now, Imuvi is exploring alternative models for bringing people back to the core through affordable housing. All this to say, while the context of Léon bore little resemblance to tiNY's site in New York, the overall goal was the same: compelling, affordable density.

In Las Americas Social Housing, which SO – IL completed in 2021, the single-loaded corridor is again the main organizing element. The six-storey, 56-unit building is essentially a figure eight with two interior courtyards to allow for cross breezes and foster a sense of community. "We looked at ancient megaliths like the Beltany stone circle in Ireland, and how those circular structures became a place for gatherings," says Liu. "There is something sacred about a courtyard — enveloping living around empty space that's undefined and that no one can claim for themselves." Viewed through a financial lens, the design still maximized the plot's buildable footprint and kept construction costs low. Local workers built the facade from 17-kilogram pleated concrete blocks laid into staggered fins, avoiding the need for off-site fabrication and expensive construction equipment like cranes, all while keeping the project's expenditure within Léon's labour market.

A 2012 proposal, tiNY arranged units between balconies (at the front) and an open corridor (at the back) to allow for cross-ventilation.

PHOTOS BY IWAN BAAN, COURTESY OF SO – IL

B2 =CONCAT(SEB+SAM)

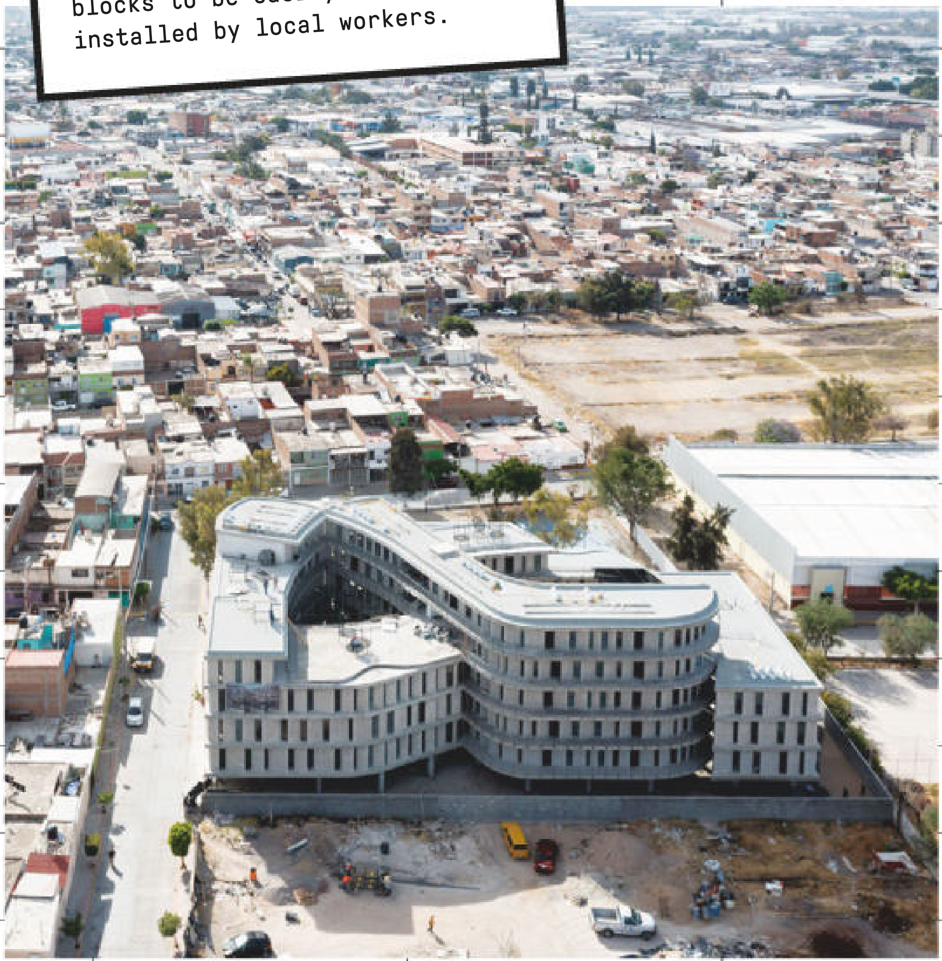
PARTNER WITH THE RIGHT DEVELOPER

+ ***ONE ASPECT OF WORKING*** in Mexico that SO – IL found particularly refreshing was the number of trained architects employed in development and at the city level. “To really innovate, experiment and deliver something different, you need architectural thinking at every scale,” says Liu. “Otherwise, it becomes about convincing someone who has no clue how this works to value it.”

Back in Brooklyn, they’ve found this same discernment in Tankhouse. The development company is run by two partners who both come by their understanding of design honestly: Sebastian Mendez, an architect who formerly worked at Foster + Partners, and Sam Alison-Mayne, the son of Morphosis founder Thom Mayne. Idenburg and Liu connected with the duo through previous employees and the quartet immediately clicked. Now, when SO – IL proposes an outside-the-box idea — like the pink facade at 144 Vanderbilt — Mendez and Alison-Mayne don’t skip a beat. “They appreciate the value of architecture,” says Idenburg. “Most brokers will say that the market won’t absorb something, but their models only know what they already know,” Liu continues. “We owe it to be investigative — what are the varieties? There are tight constraints, but there is still looseness, too.”

Mendez and Alison-Mayne also have a personal investment in Fort Greene and Gowanus, the neighbourhoods in which they are building. Both SO – IL and Tankhouse’s partners live within a short walk of the developments that they have partnered on (Mendez actually lives in one of 450 Warren’s units), giving them deeper insight into the areas — and holding them accountable for anything they introduce there. For instance, while Idenburg says it’s too early to say who will occupy the commercial units at 144 Vanderbilt, he promises that Tankhouse isn’t leasing them to a bank. “It’s much more important to get the right person than to make an extra buck,” he says.

In Léon, Mexico, LAS AMERICAS arranged 56 units in a figure eight formation around two open courtyards, again allowing for cross-ventilation while also encouraging more social interaction between residents. SO – IL designed the pleated concrete facade’s 17-kilogram blocks to be easily carried and installed by local workers.



C3 =IF(GFP>MIN, “FIT”)

RETHINK HOW SPACE GETS ALLOCATED

+ ***TANKHOUSE AND SO – IL’S GREATEST ACHIEVEMENT*** has been finding ways to move beyond the default interpretation of zoning bylaws, which limit how much of a lot can be used for actual built space. “The requirements in New York City dictate that about 30 to 40 per cent — depending on what district you’re building in — remains open space,” says Liu. In New York City projects, this typically results in a forgotten zone at the back of a building. But in SO – IL’s rethink at 450 Warren and its successors (which follow the same logic as Las Americas Social Housing in Léon, Mexico), the “unbuilt” portion instead becomes a series of outdoor hubs surrounded by open circulation — in the case of 450 Warren, a central courtyard and two communal side yards. “The sellable, buildable square footage is already maximized,” explains Liu. “It’s not like we’re taking away from that square footage to make exterior corridors. But they add value back to the development by becoming an important space for the community.” In another clever use of outdoor space, a small vestibule area in front of each unit creates room for strollers, umbrellas, benches or shoes.

At least in theory, this should work — and there are no shortage of precedents around the world to prove it. But put into practice in New York, the idea broke the algorithm. Financial institutions evaluating potential investments seek to minimize gross floor area (the amount of area they have to build) and maximize net floor area (the amount of area they can sell). Sure enough, when Alison-Mayne came back from the bank, he had bad news: Tankhouse’s loan application was denied. “The software said the ratios were off — the project had too much exterior facade for the floor area. Based on the way that projects are financed in NYC, it couldn't exist," explains Idenburg. With the bank unwilling to budge, Mendez instead sourced cash from his personal network, hoping to develop a proven track record that can win the bank over when it comes to future projects. "There are qualities that we think people value. But now we need to prove it within the market," Idenburg says. Sure enough, 450 Warren sold out and turned a profit.

At times, SO – IL's inventive approach has also befuddled building inspectors. "We read the code very, very carefully," says Idenburg. "We know where there's room for interpretation." The safety netting that encloses the sinuous exterior walkways in 450 Warren is a case in point. "We were able to forgo handrails just by using this airy netting. The design made it past somebody's desk, but when the inspector came and we walked him through it, he was flabbergasted. He said, 'In some ways, I hate it, but I have to approve it.' " On the other hand, the project has been raised up as a positive example, too. "Some of the units are actually being used in tests by New York City Housing Authority to measure how much energy is required to ventilate them in the summer," Idenburg says. Because each unit has at least two (and as many as four) orientations, they allow for more comfortable airflow; similarly, their high thermal mass helps to keep them relatively cool in the summer.

D4 *=SUBSTITUTE("DOG-SPA", "COURTYARD")*

ESTABLISH FRESH PRIORITIES

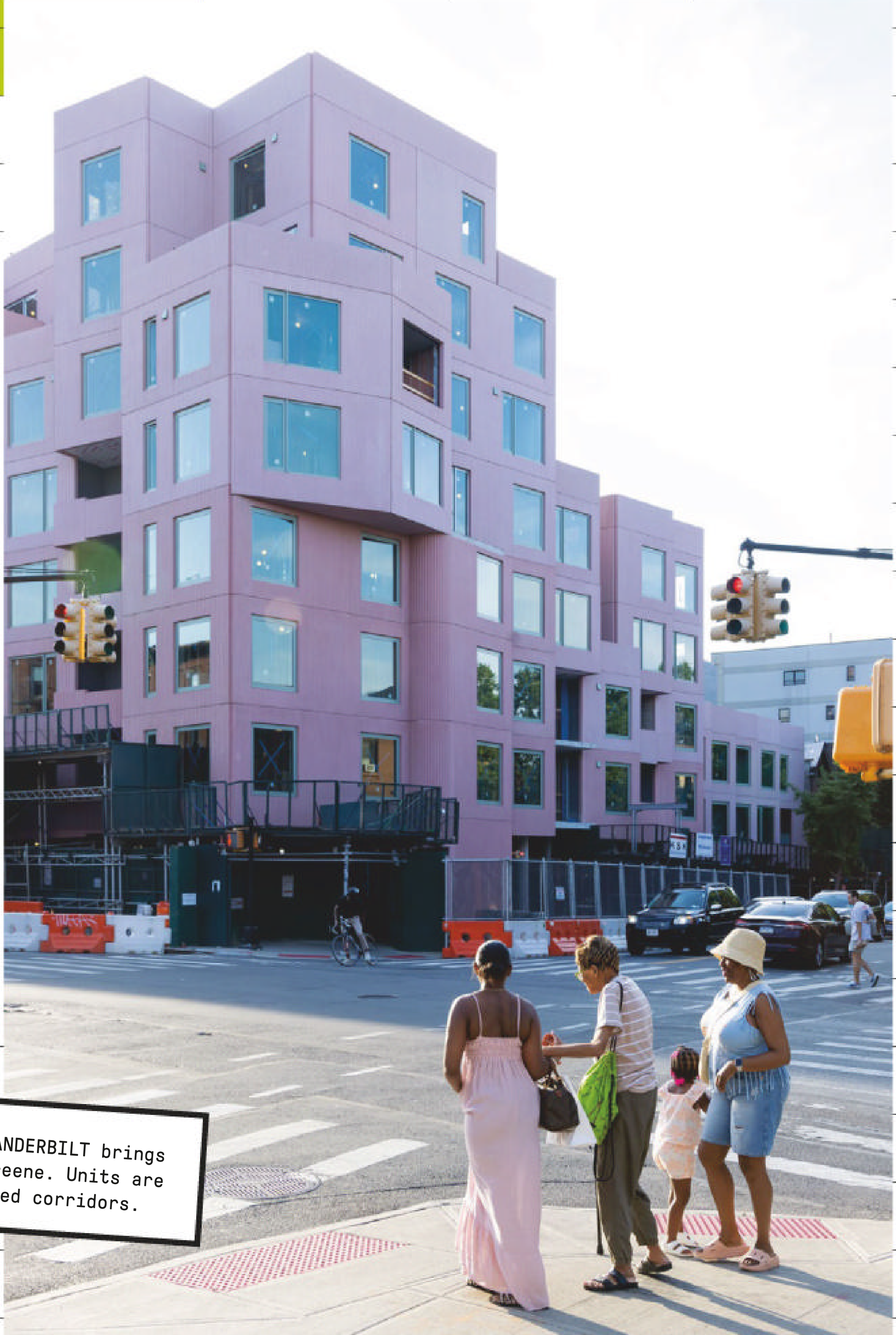
+ ***SO – IL BALANCES THE MORE EXPENSIVE ASPECTS*** of its designs with two main cost-saving strategies. The first is to approach amenities from a different point of view. "There's a tower around the corner from our building that has a dog spa and a bike repair shop," says Idenburg. "Another one has an Uber drop-off so that you never actually have to leave the building — almost like you're on a cruise ship. But it's better if that life happens in the streets — at the bike shop or dog spa around the corner that is part of a larger community." To Idenburg, a sense of connection is the best amenity he can offer. "What's exciting to us is that you suddenly become aware of everybody else in your building, and you realize that maybe someone upstairs has kids the same age as yours," he says. Along with its communal courtyards, 144 Vanderbilt makes room for a fitness centre, children's playroom and co-working lounge.

SO – IL's second savvy economic move is to work with rookie contractors. "The reality is that the projects go to the lowest bidder," Idenburg says. "It means that we have to do a lot of work during construction, but it's the only way that we can build. Our metal guy ran a pizza shop during the day. That's the nice thing about Brooklyn. That's part of the hustle."

E5 *CMD-1>FILL*

EMBRACE COLOUR

+ ***THE CASCADING FORM*** and fluted pink concrete facade of 144 Vanderbilt (which is on track to be completed early this year) are further evidence of SO – IL's ability to balance creative and practical considerations. The building's shape is a direct response to zoning restrictions, which allow for eight storeys on the Myrtle Avenue side but only four on Vanderbilt Avenue — yet its stacked, twisting massing also helps distinguish it from other housing developments that skew more conventionally boxy. "It's replacing an older gas station, so we were thinking about how the building should express itself as a sculpture," says Liu. Adding pigment to precast cladding became a way to amplify its landmark status. "But we also wanted to have something that is not foreign," Idenburg adds. Pink, which echoes the red brick of nearby buildings, became the perfect hue. "Red is also easier to achieve," Idenburg continues, "compared to blue or green — which need an incredible amount of dye."



Made from fluted precast concrete, 144 VANDERBILT brings a pink landmark to Brooklyn's Fort Greene. Units are again configured around open, single-loaded corridors.

PHOTO BY IWAN BAAN (144 VANDERBILT AVE); SO – IL (PORTRAIT)

Along with working on additional housing developments for Tankhouse, SO – IL's team is busy designing projects for Williams College and Detroit's Library Street Collective.

> Everyone tells us,'That's a nice idea, but you have to prove it with the numbers.' We're very keen on making sure that we have all the data so that people can see how it makes sense.

OF COURSE, NOT EVERY PROBLEM has a tidy solution. Idenburg and Liu learned that the hard way back in November 2022, when they posted two job openings (for a designer with two to five years of experience and a project architect with five to eight) on Instagram. The pay specified for the positions was US$55,000 and US$65,000, respectively — amounts that commenters found to be outrageously low. In the eyes of architecture meme accounts that advocate for healthier studio culture, SO – IL's management became public enemy number one.

In response, Idenburg and Liu brought in an outside team of financial consultants and recalibrated their payment structure, removing the profit-sharing that they had originally extended to associates (which they say would have bolstered the salaries advertised in their original post) in favour of higher base salaries. "None of our staff left. We raised the benefits in the office quite a bit, and we had a very long set of discussions," Liu says. Yet they admit they will probably never be able to compete with the pay offered by larger, more corporate firms. "I think the gist of that conversation was that we need to make more profit," says Liu. "But as a smaller firm, you're inevitably doing smaller-scale projects that bigger firms didn't want because they're not profitable. So how do you break out of that? Our staff tell us that people choose to work here because of the level of integrity and dignity we get from it. How do you balance that with the reality of living in New York City?"

An increase in commercial residential work could be seen as a strategy — but it isn't that simple. "Even in the buildings we make with Tankhouse, there's not a single repeating unit, which means you have to draw three times as much, and we need to be on site more to get the quality right," says Liu. "We feel like if you have a variety of different unit types, it produces a much more diverse, maybe complex community," Idenburg adds. "If we made a double-loaded corridor in a box, we'd be done." Liu echoes the sentiment. "We know how to make a profitable business that is careless — but what does that do to us? As architects, we chose this profession to make the world better," she says. She points to an art museum project for Williams College in Williamstown, Massachusetts, as a dream scenario. "Every project should be like that one, because they truly value architecture," adds Idenburg. "But it's not about making a profit. The university realizes that it is important for them to build a building that lasts for a hundred years, so there's a true investment in space."

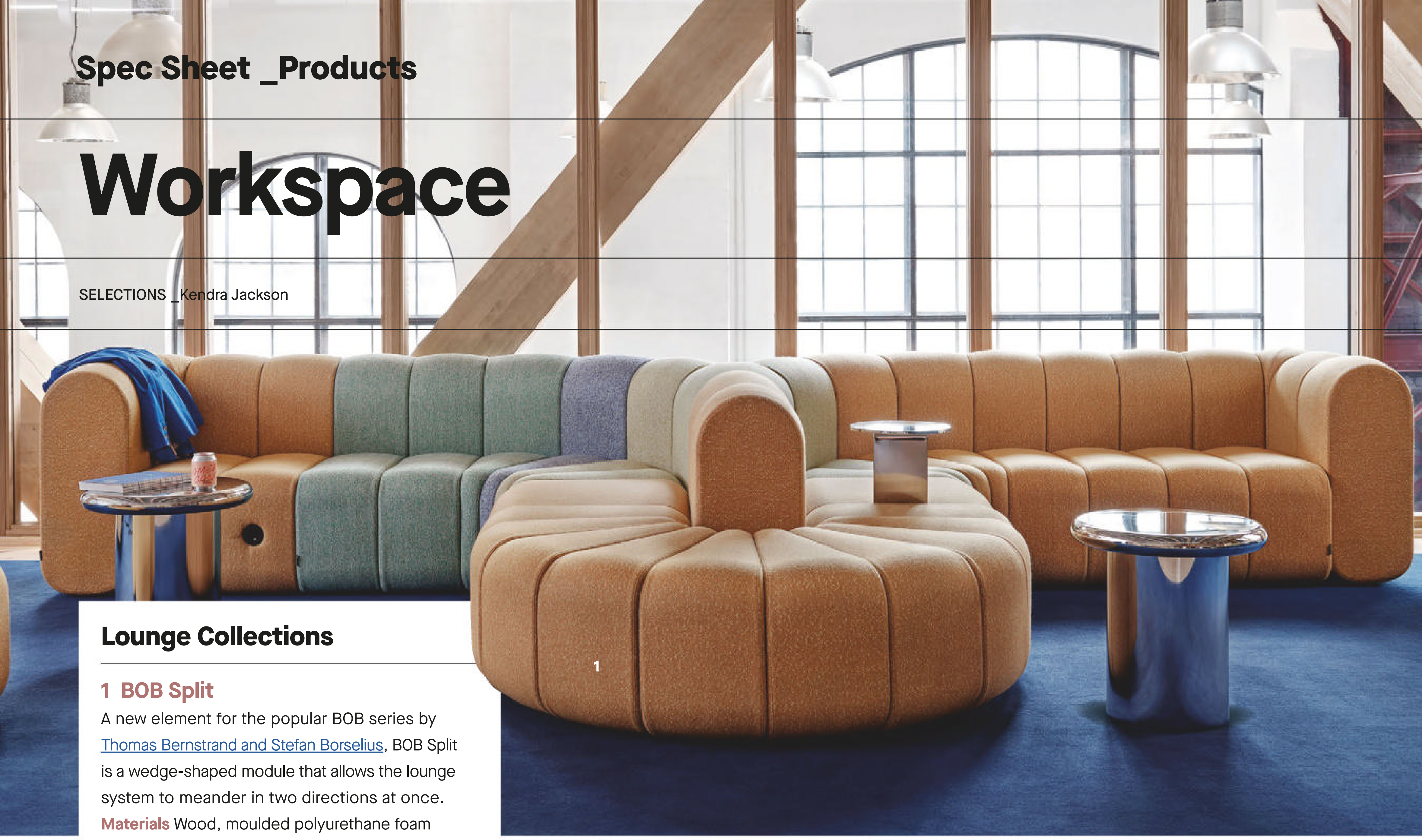
Ultimately, while Idenburg and Liu may call New York home, they recognize that the city's ultra-high cost of living is part of the problem. The projects they have built with Tankhouse so far have sold at market rate; units at 144 Vanderbilt start at $1.95 million. (The team does have an affordable housing project forthcoming in Gowanus.) What does it mean for SO – IL's vision of a diverse, dynamic neighbourhood if most of its employees can't afford to live there? Perhaps Detroit poses a better opportunity. SO – IL is currently working with Anthony and JJ Curis of Library Street Collective on a master plan for an arts campus at the Stanton Yards marina. "It's a place where young people can start families, because they can actually afford a house. And there's a lot of creativity and space. It's really the opposite of New York, in that you can test new models," says Idenburg. "Anthony Curis has asked us, 'Why don't you have an office here?' It would allow us to do work for other places from Detroit. It's only an hour flight."

The Stanton Yards site was also the subject of their studio at the University of Toronto this past fall; as the Daniels Faculty's 2024–2025 Frank Gehry International Visiting Chairs, the architects taught a class dubbed "Big Little Village" that tasked students with envisioning a co-op community where ownership is renewed on a 12-year cycle. The class description reads: "We imagine such a community will inherit and be indebted to a post-capital site, transforming it slowly over time without the infusion of external capital. It will care about its neighbours as much as itself, as by lifting everyone else around you, you also lift yourself." In conversation, Idenburg contrasts that line of thinking with Wall Street's prevailing financial logic. "From a market point of view, seven years is the cycle for a building: You want to get your money out in seven years, and after that, the building has no value anymore on paper. But what is the potential of a brick in that place — how much life does it have? It's about shifting the conversation from just making new investments green to extending the lifespan of materials."

In development, you can never escape the numbers — yet designing around the numbers alone ignores more important considerations. SO – IL's process may be driven by hard data (indeed, its new book, *In Depth: Urban Domesticities Today*, includes several pages of spreadsheets), but this is more of a practical adaptation than a true creative strategy. "Everyone tells us, 'That's a nice idea, but you have to prove it with the numbers.' We're very keen on making sure that we have all the data so that people can see how it makes sense: the unit count, the construction cost, the floor area ratio, the density. The algorithm is still guiding everything when someone starts thinking about a project," says Idenburg. But to him and Liu, all these numbers must still add up to a happy life. "We need to think about what human desire is: We want to connect with each other. We want to leave traces of ourselves, and we want to create memories. So how do we make that happen, spatially and materially?" asks Liu. Time to fire up Excel. **AZ**

Workspace

SELECTIONS _Kendra Jackson



1

Lounge Collections

1 BOB Split

A new element for the popular BOB series by Thomas Bernstrand and Stefan Borselius, BOB Split is a wedge-shaped module that allows the lounge system to meander in two directions at once.

Materials Wood, moulded polyurethane foam

Dimensions 40 H × 71 W × 151 D

Manufacturer Blå Station, ***blastation.com***

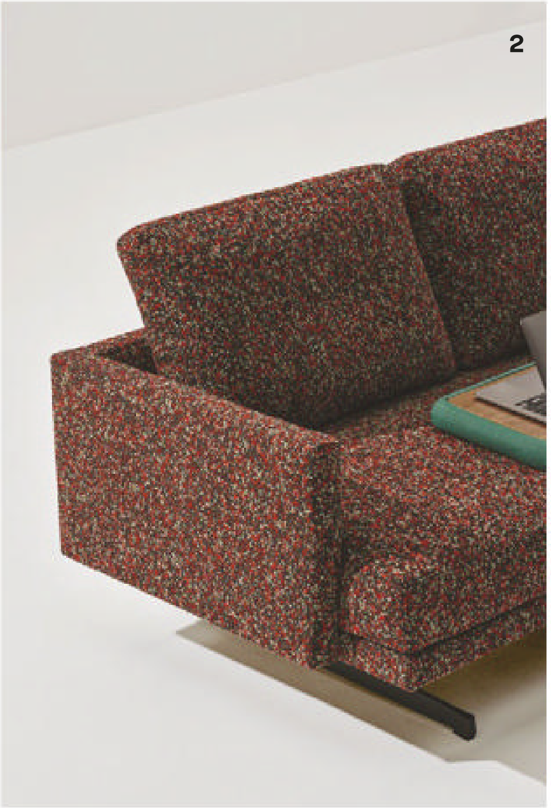
2 Steeve Lou

With special cushioning foam and a seat depth informed by ergonomics, the Steeve Lou two- and three-seater sofas by Jean-Marie Massaud make comfortable spots for getting work done; end tables can be added to increase functionality.

Materials Steel, wood, aluminum, foam

Dimensions 81.5 H × 167.9 or 242.5 W × 89.8 D

Manufacturer Arper, ***arper.com***



2

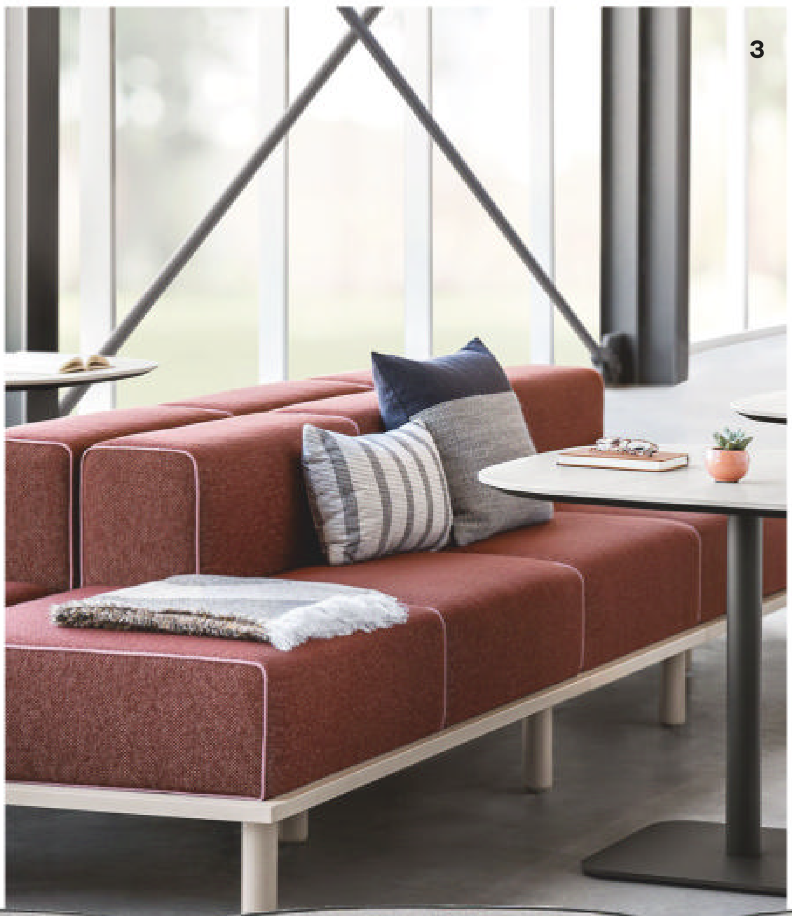
3 Rise Platform Lounge

An addition to the Rise modular series, Rise Platform Lounge lifts the upholstered volumes off the ground to create tiered seating arrangements. Power outlets can be undermounted anywhere along the platform.

Materials FSC plywood, foam, laminate

Dimensions Multiple

Manufacturer Allsteel, ***allsteeloffice.com***



3

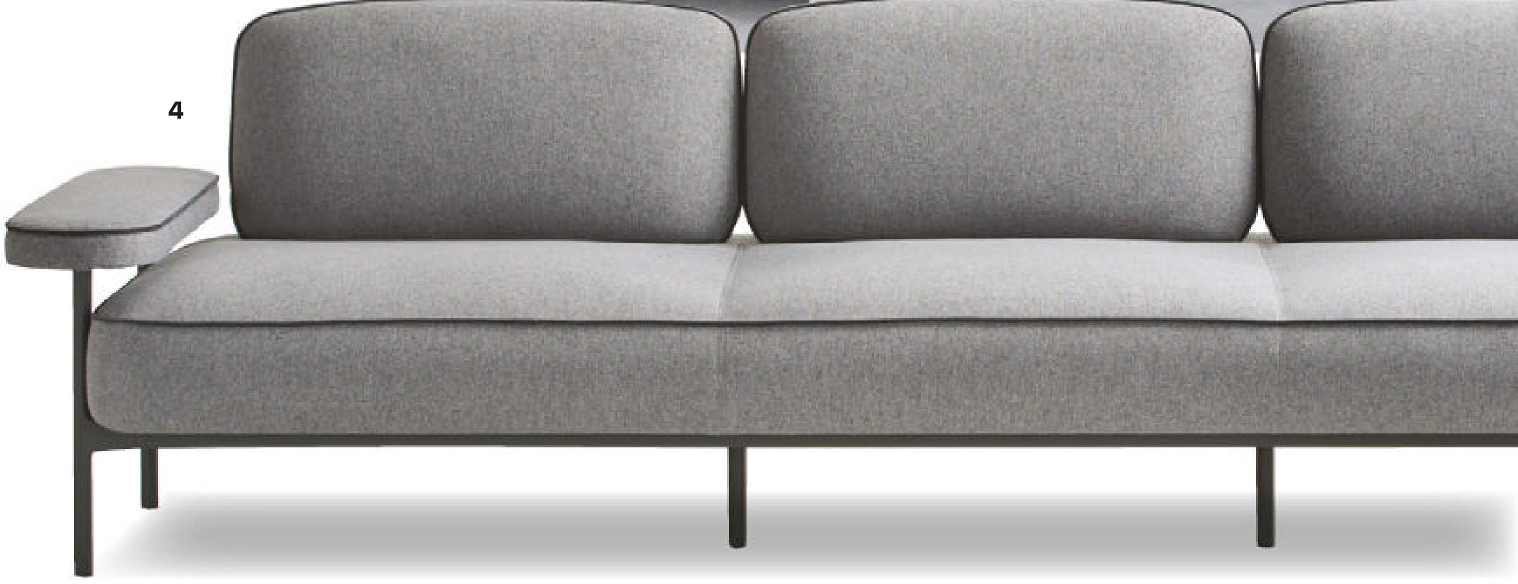
4 Friends

Noé Duchaufour-Lawrance and Luca Nichetto collaborated on Friends, a series of modules in organic and geometric shapes that can be configured in multiple ways. Optional arm rests come in upholstered, wood or phenolic; contrasting textiles can be selected for the back cushion, seat and welt.

Materials Metal, wood, foam

Dimensions Multiple

Manufacturer Bernhardt Design, ***bernhardtdesign.com***



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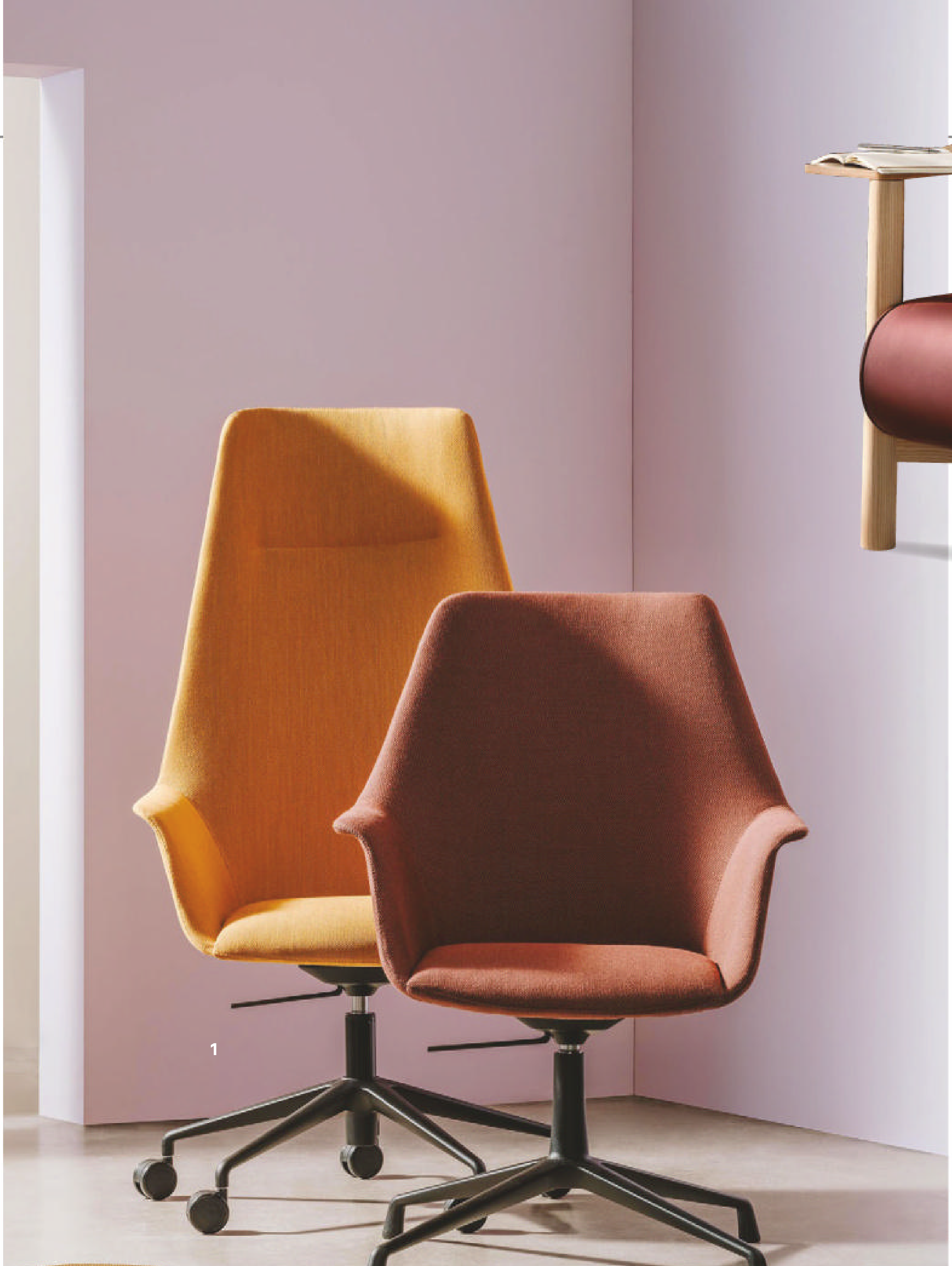

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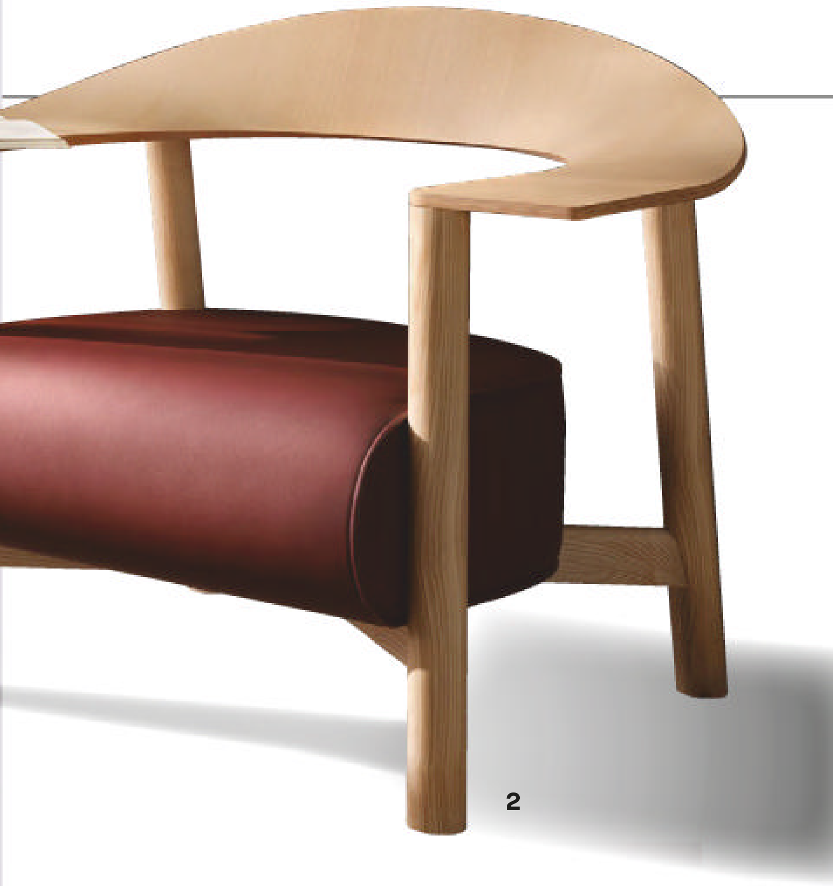


2

Guest Chairs

1 Gala Executive

Gala Executive by Piergiorgio Cazzaniga utilizes foams of varying densities for an ultra-comfortable and supportive seat. It's available in two heights, two backrest variations (fully upholstered or with a walnut plywood exterior) and four- or five-wheel swivel bases.

Materials Aluminum, foam, plywood
Dimensions Multiple
Manufacturer Andreu World, ***andreuworld.com***

2 Dais

Designed by Form Us With Love using a minimal amount of material, Dais maximizes comfort with a thick padded seat and a swooping bent plywood back, which seamlessly morphs into generous armrests that form a surface for a notebook or laptop.

Materials Ash, foam
Dimensions 77.4 H × 95.2 W × 70.4 D
Manufacturer Keilhauer, ***keilhauer.com***

3 Allora Guest

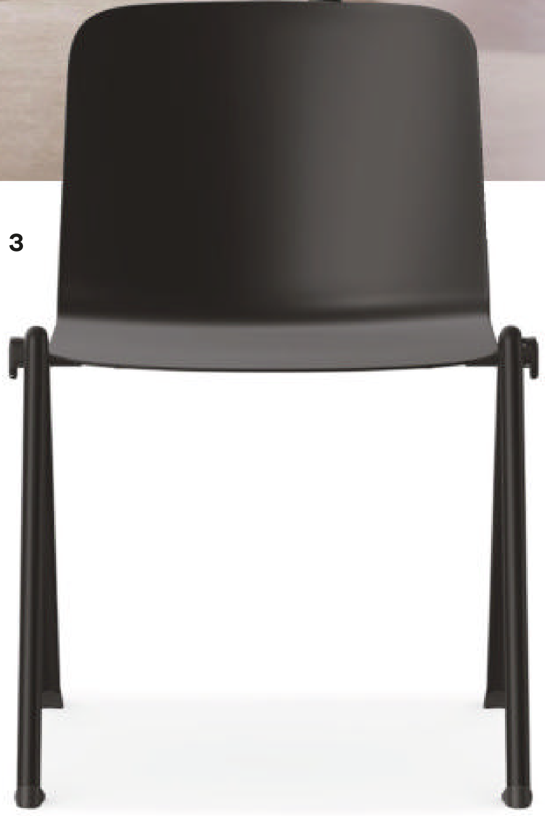
A single-shell seat, Allora Guest by SF+M can be configured with a variety of optional elements: an upholstered seat pad, adjustable armrests, tablet arms, book baskets and ganging bars or linking caps; some versions can be stacked up to 15 high.

Materials Polypropylene, metal
Dimensions 77.7 H × 57.4 or 69.5 W × 48.2 D
Manufacturer Allseating, ***allseating.com***

4 Jotta

For the Jotta chair, Estudi Manel Molina was inspired by the natural beauty of elements found in the forest — specifically, the graceful arch of the arm references pine boughs. Multiple finishes are offered for the aluminum arms and four- or five-star base.

Materials Metal, aluminum, plastic, foam
Dimensions 99 to 114.3 H × 60.9 W × 60.9 D
Manufacturer Studio TK, ***studiotk.com***



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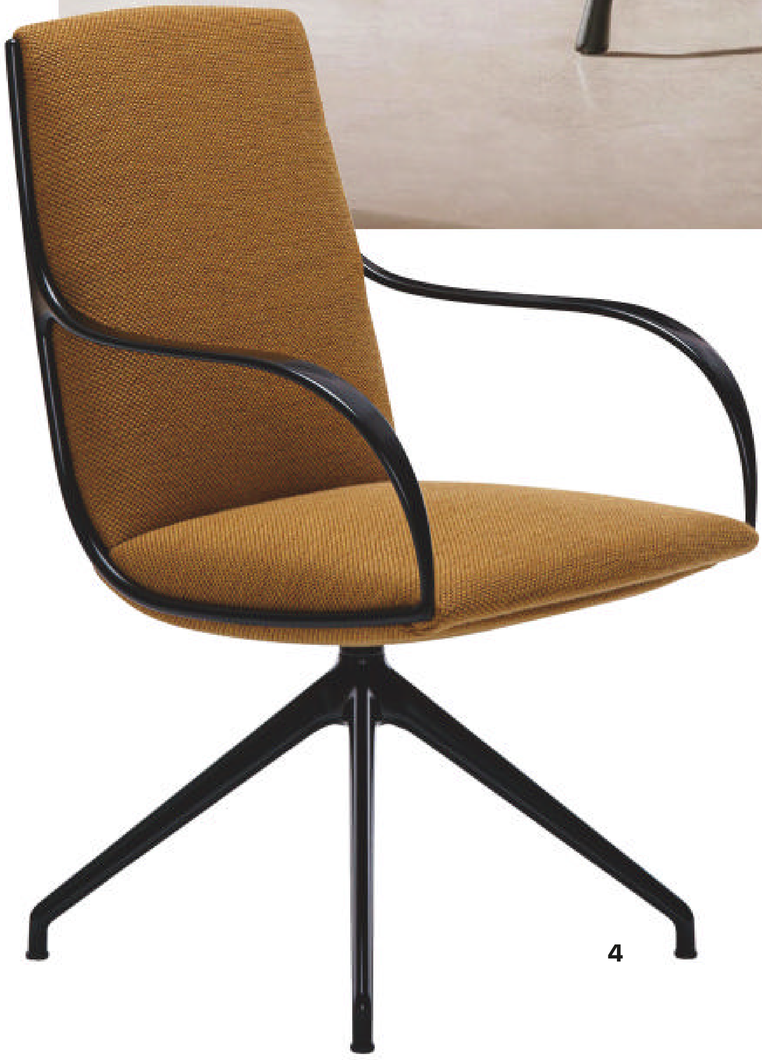
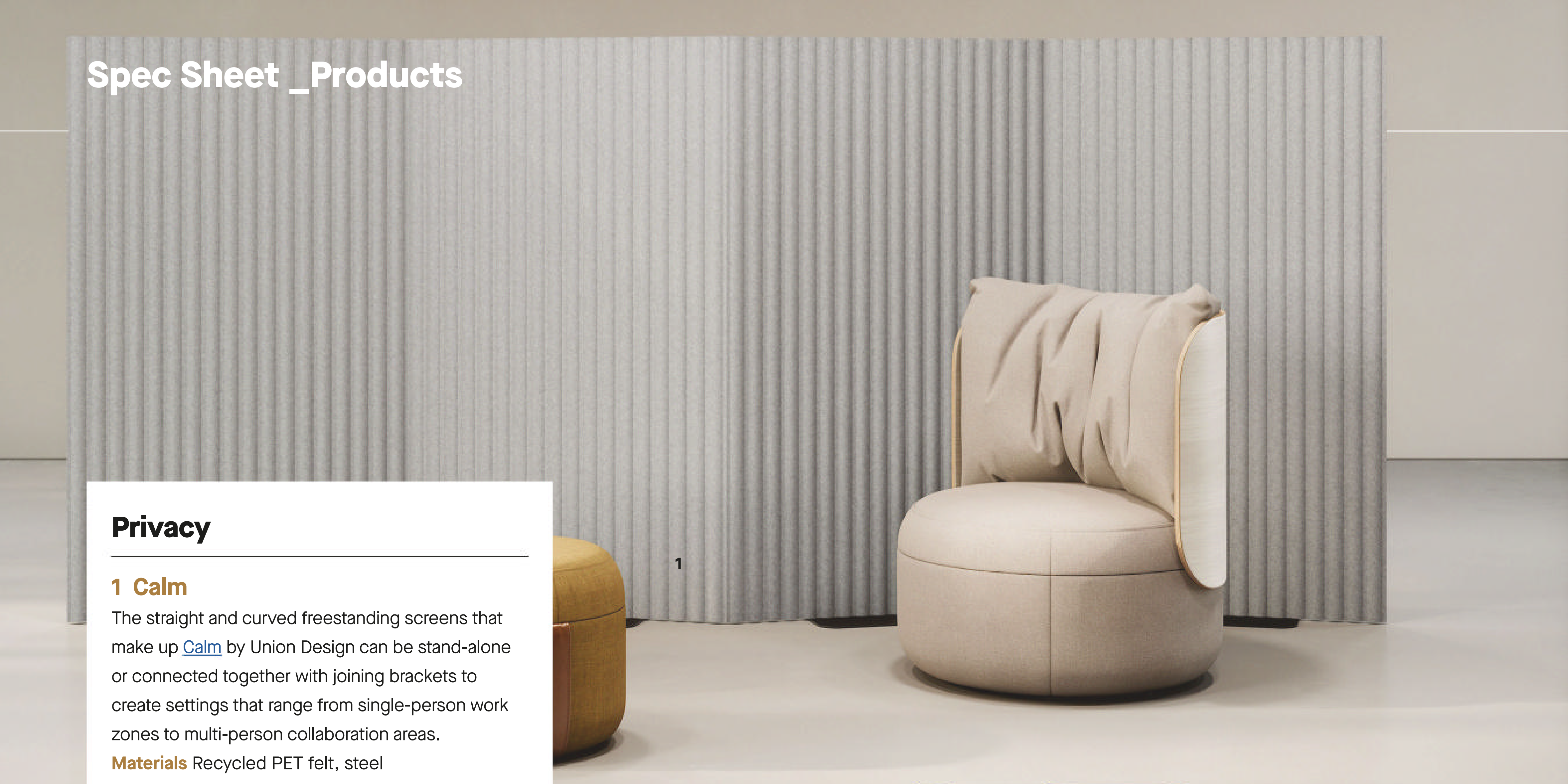


4

ALL DIMENSIONS PROVIDED ARE IN
CENTIMETRES UNLESS OTHERWISE STATED



Privacy

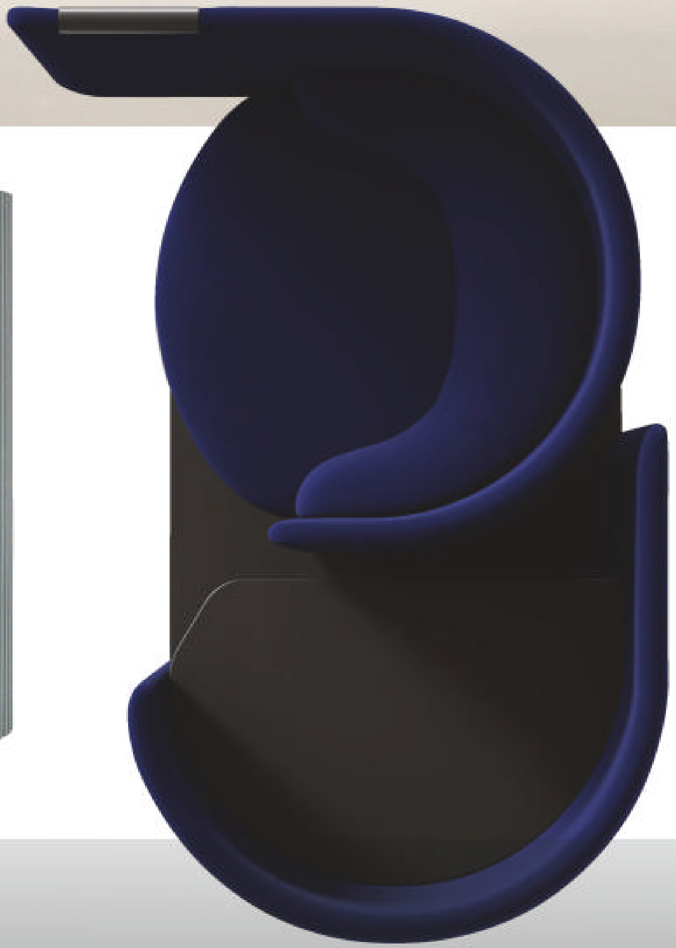
1 Calm

The straight and curved freestanding screens that make up Calm by Union Design can be stand-alone or connected together with joining brackets to create settings that range from single-person work zones to multi-person collaboration areas.

Materials Recycled PET felt, steel

Dimensions 152.4 H × 91.4 W × 2.4 D (straight); 152.4 H × 54.1 W × 2.4 D (curved, 87.6 radius)

Manufacturer KFI Studios, kfistudios.com



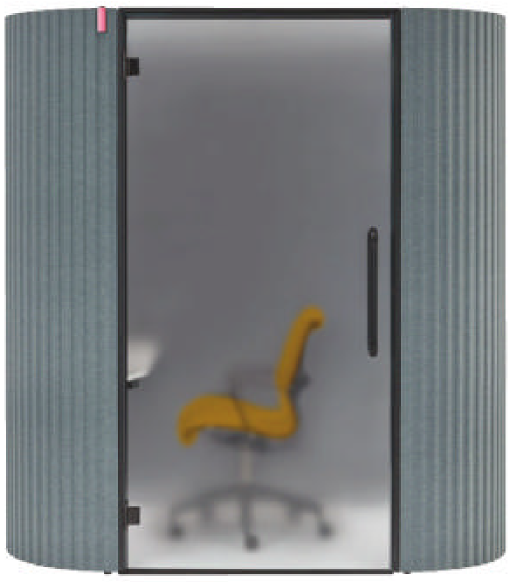
2 Tulipan

A "micro–quiet space" by London-based design studio Industrial Facility, Tulipan is entered through a rotating wall with a built-in seat. Equipped with a small table, the pocket of privacy allows for undisturbed work when closed; the open top maintains a muted connection to the wider environment.

Materials Steel, plywood, hard and soft foam

Dimensions 137.6 H × 137.4 W × 80.8 D

Manufacturer +Halle, plushalle.com



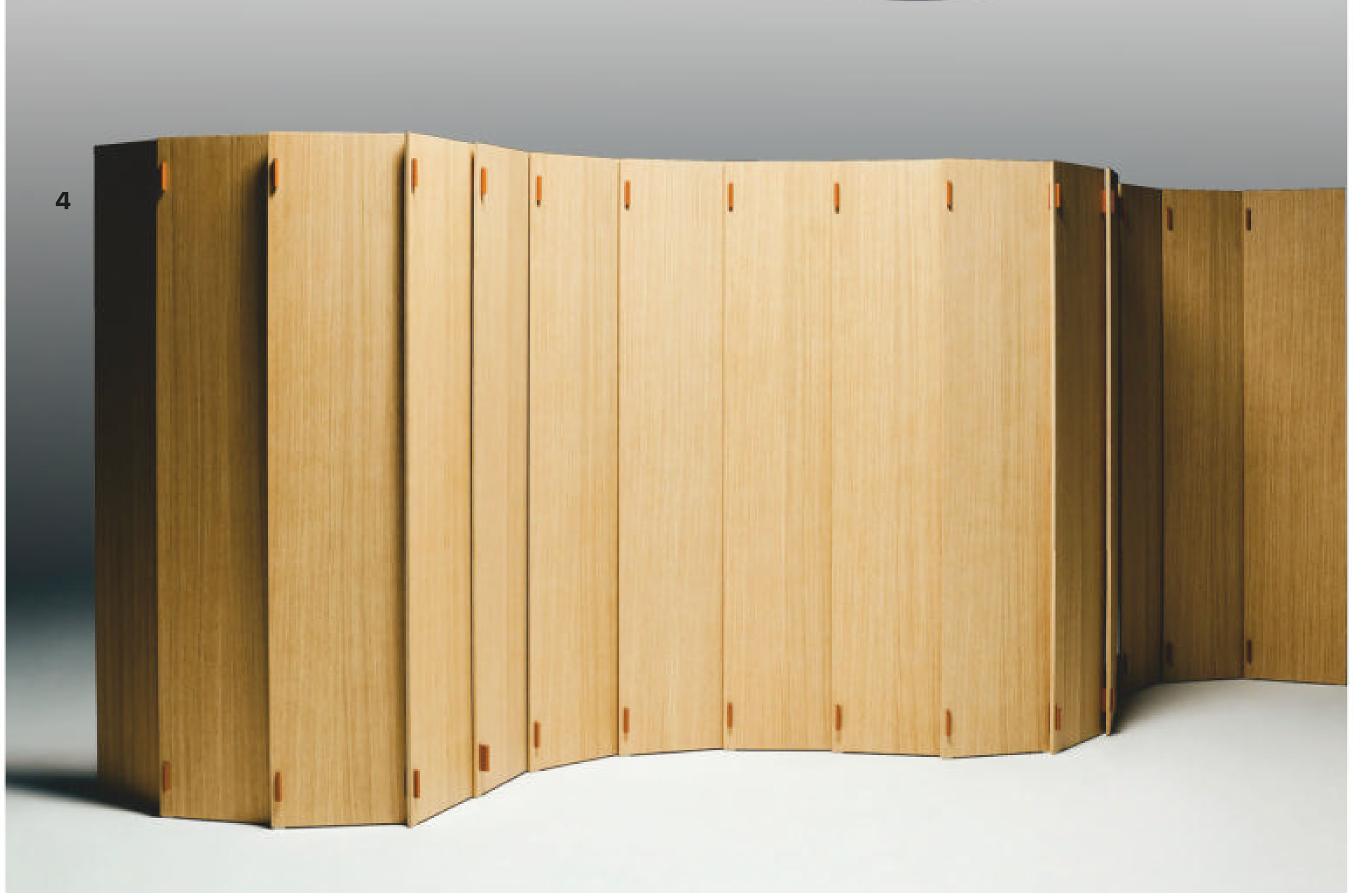
3 Bay Work Pod

Providing a short-term focus space, Bay Work Pod blocks distractions with its corrugated fabric exterior and optional clear or frosted glass door. Lighting is optimized for virtual calls, while a skylight allows more illumination to enter. Two sizes are available, the larger spacious enough for a wheelchair.

Materials PET, textiles, laminate, glass

Dimensions 210.8 H × 142.2 or 198.1 W × 127 D

Manufacturer Herman Miller, hermanmiller.com



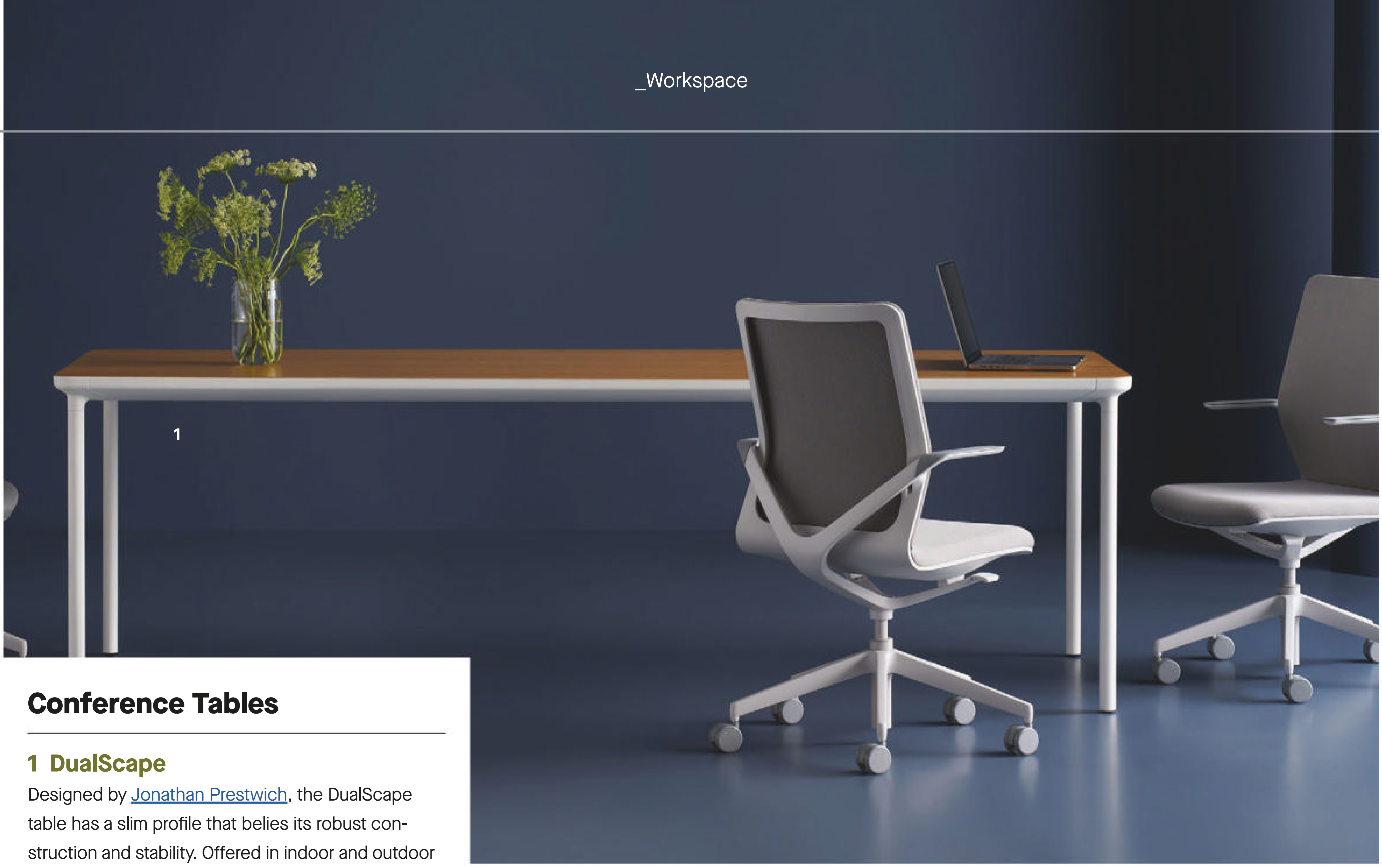
4 WOD

Designed by Italian architect Raffaella Mangiarotti with a three-pocket cylindrical hinge and wooden dowel interlocking mechanism, the WOD panel can move from straight to curved and back again with ease. Made from a single material (wood or felt) without screws or glue, the panels are easily recycled at the end of their life.

Materials Wood or felt, hide (hinges)

Dimensions 180 H × 37 W per panel; custom sizing available

Manufacturer Lapalma, lapalma.it

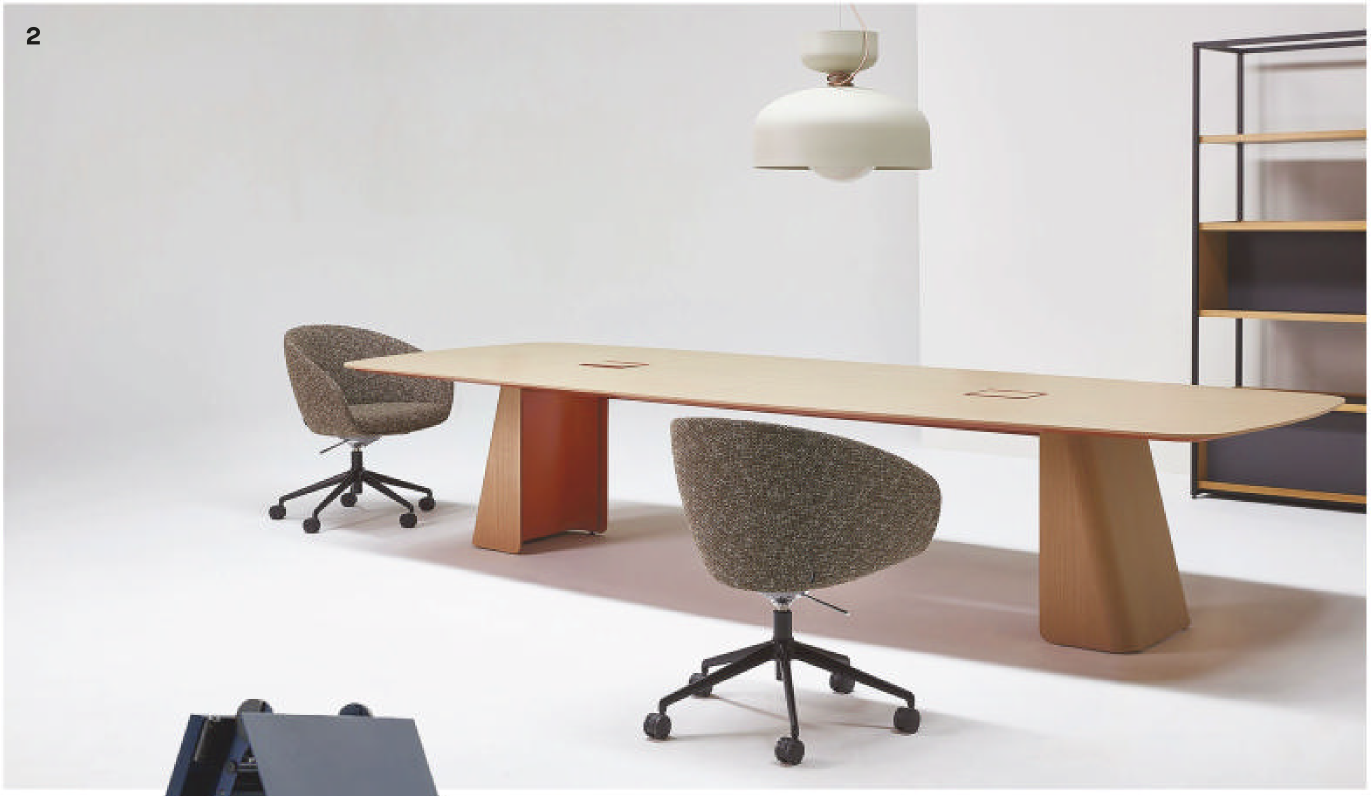


Conference Tables

1 DualScape

Designed by Jonathan Prestwich, the DualScape table has a slim profile that belies its robust construction and stability. Offered in indoor and outdoor versions, the tables are available in square and rectangular shapes, each in a variety of sizes.

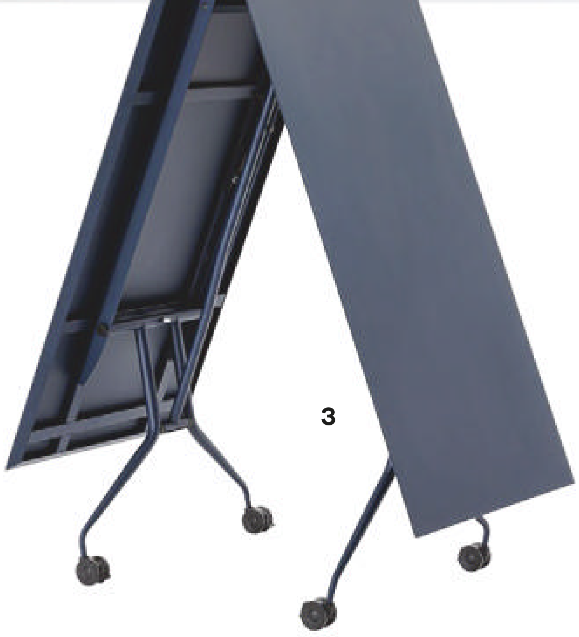
Materials Aluminum, multiple surfaces
Dimensions Multiple
Manufacturer Davis Furniture, davisfurniture.com



2 Moss

Toronto designer and artist Deborah Moss marries organic details and industrial materials with strong architectural forms in the Moss collection of conference tables. Multiple tabletop formats and edge profiles are available to pair with the sculptural base.

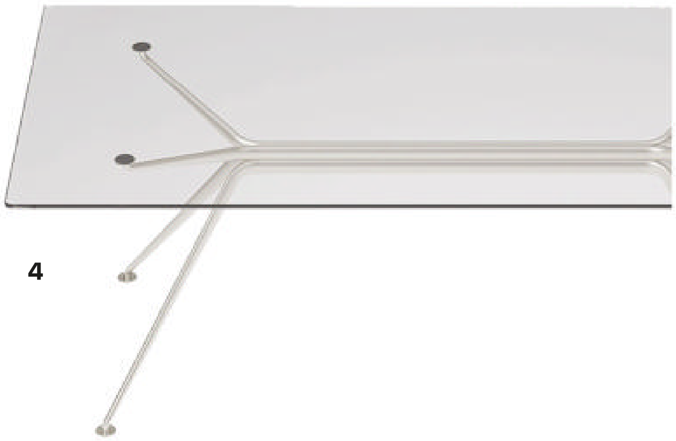
Materials Veneer, plastic laminates, glass, stone
Dimensions Multiple
Manufacturer Nienkämper, nienkamper.com



3 Argo Libro Metal

A versatile table for meetings, conference rooms and co-working and training spaces, Argo Libro Metal has a mechanical anti-shock folding system that can be operated by a single person. Made from ultra-thin steel (offered in a rainbow of powder-coated finishes), the table is 100 per cent recyclable.

Materials Metal
Dimensions Multiple
Manufacturer Mara, ***marasrl.it***



4 Cosmos

A collaboration with the Norman Foster Foundation, the modular Cosmos table series is built around a flexible skeletal structure that can expand to accommodate a large number of surface sizes.

Materials Recyclable aluminum, glass
Dimensions Multiple
Manufacturer Tecno, ***tecnospa.com***

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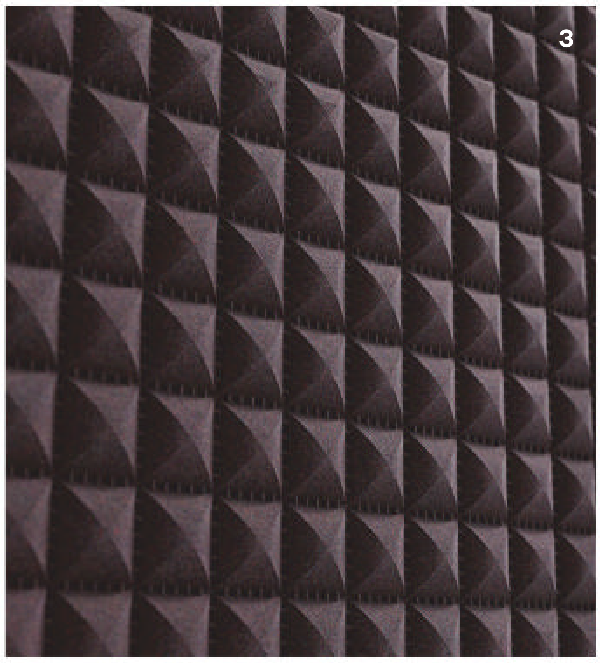
Acoustic Solutions

SELECTIONS _Eric Mutrie



Wall

1 Hush Clad

3form Elements can print these 244-by-122-centimetre panels, which are made from 50 per cent post-consumer recycled PET, with custom or pre-existing designs, including the leaf pattern shown. Optional bevel cuts add an extra sense of depth by revealing the base colour of an underlying layer.

2 Bloom

Take time to stop and smell the flowers with **Slalom**'s panels, offered in sizes measuring 59.5 by 59.5 or 280 by 136 centimetres. Manufactured from a blend of flax and viscose, each one features a unique arrangement of flower petals treated at high temperatures to remove their allergens.

3 Emboss

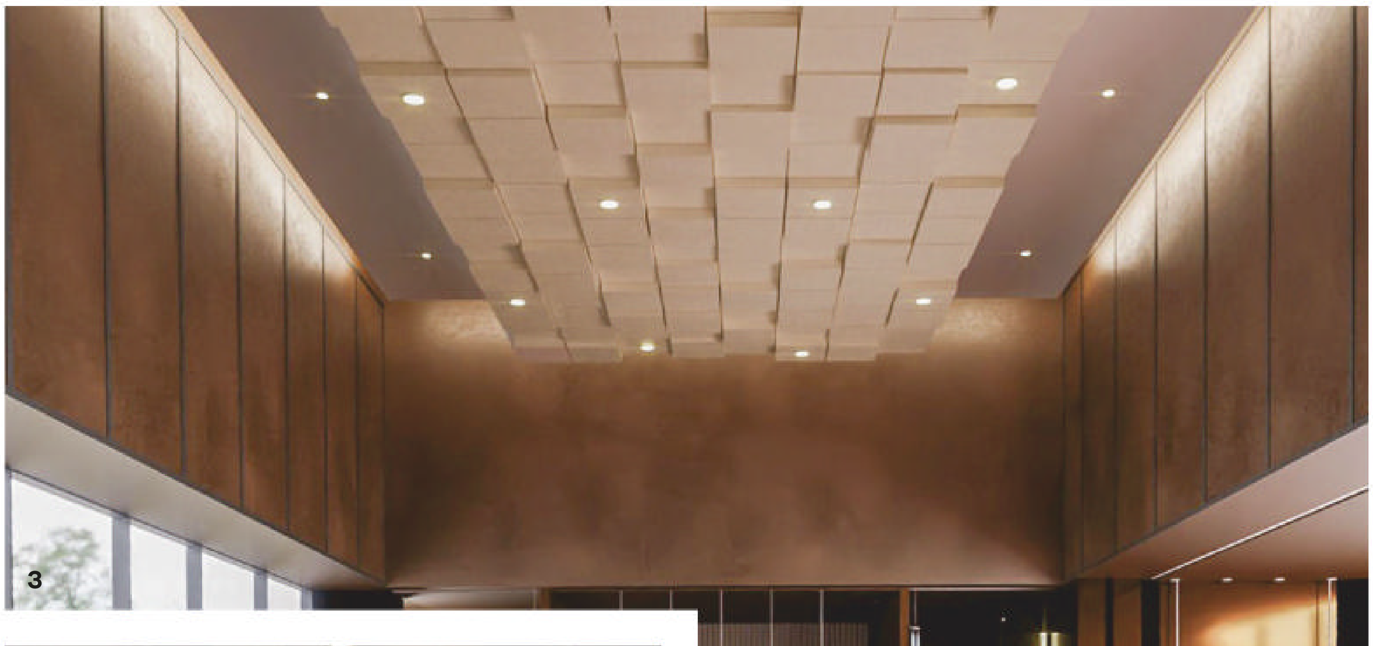
Zintra revives craft traditions with a collection of 18 new designs. Stitch (shown) frames a grid of embossed squares with rows of stitching and features a noise reduction coefficient (NRC) of 0.35. Made from 100 per cent recyclable materials, the 274-by-112-centimetre panels are certified by Declare, Greenguard and HPD.

4 Barcelona

Digital design tools allow **Turf** to calibrate its stone-look finishes to stretch across multiple 244-by-112-centimetre panels with seamless bookmatching and minimal pattern repetition. Installed using Z-clips, the collection features an NRC of 0.85. A vertical panel, Monolith, is also available.

5 Ecoustic Bio

Crafted from 100 per cent bio-based materials derived from hemp, flax and agricultural by-products, **Unika Vaev**'s Ecoustic Bio tiles are offered in two shapes: a flat design, and a curved elliptical one that can be arranged in a variety of ways to create sculptural feature walls. Both styles achieve an NRC of 0.85.



Ceiling

1 GiosFelt Clouds

Akouo Acoustics sees peace and quiet in your next project's forecast. Three sizes of ceiling clouds — each measuring 12 millimetres thick — are offered in six shapes, including the cumulus-like quatrefoil design featured. NRC ratings range from 0.45 to 0.85.

2 Crest

Acoufelt modelled its sculptural ceiling elements after billowing ocean waves, developing a rounded shape that is both sound-absorbing and visually calming. Choose colours from the manufacturer's Premier and WoodGrain collections, with customizable sizing.

3 Gradi

MPS Acoustics brings three-dimensional depth and noise-cancelling power to standard 2.4-centimetre T-grid ceiling systems. Square tiles measure 60.9 by 60.9 centimetres, with depths ranging from five to 20.3 centimetres. Depending on the final configuration, acoustic absorption can reach an NRC of up to 1.30.

4 Slot Diagonal

FACT Design's zigzagging panels slice across ceilings with all the visual thrill (and, thanks to optional integrated lighting, even some of the glow) of lightning, yet none of the noise of thunder. Tiles slot into 1.4- or 2.4-centimetre T-grids, allowing for fully concealed installs in the latter.

5 Stratawood 2x2

Fräsch's signature ceiling panels combine the warmth of linear wood slats with the acoustic performance of PET felt. A recent expansion to the line introduced a new 60-by-60-centimetre size that fits into common T-grid ceilings. Offered with a variety of veneers, Stratawood 2x2 boasts an NRC rating of 0.80.

> MORE ONLINE

Find other wall + ceiling options at *azuremagazine.com/spec-sheets*

Persons of Interest

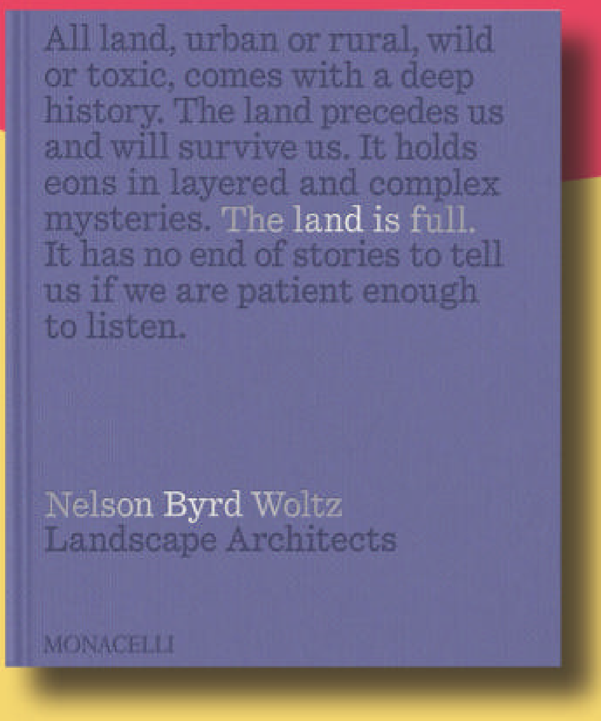
THREE TITLES EXPLORE THE
CONTRIBUTIONS OF KEY PLAYERS
IN ARCHITECTURE AND DESIGN

BY _Sydney Shilling

Harriet Harriss | Naomi House | Monika Parrinder | Tom Ravenscroft
100
WOMEN
architectsinpractice
RIBA

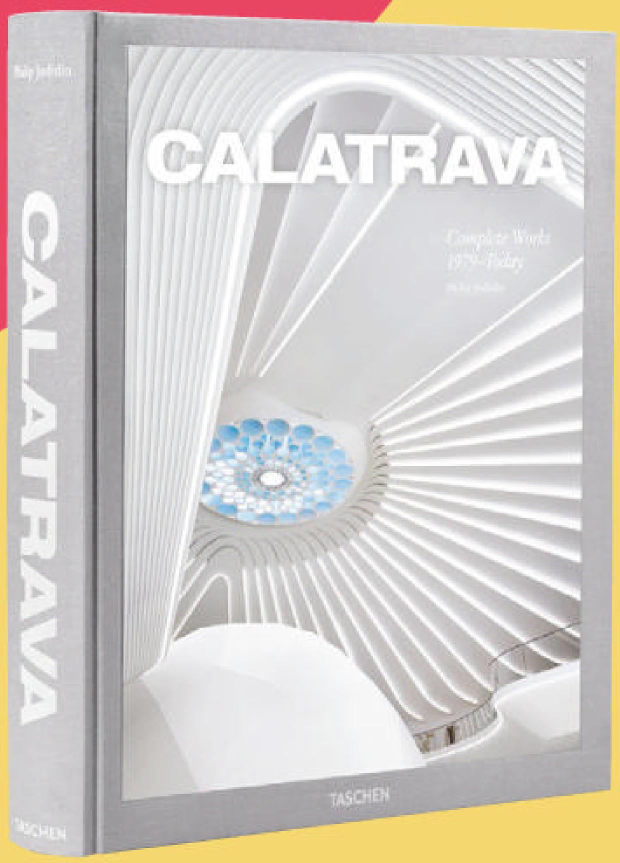
100 Women: Architects in Practice

Described as a "sample, and not an exhaustive survey" of the world's female architects, this volume showcases the built works for which these women are best known, as well as their social impact on a male-dominated field. The book is organized geographically, seeking to bring light to regions long overlooked in the Eurocentric architectural canon. "While most of us can name more household products than we can women architects, this book also features women from countries and regions where most of us can't name a male architect, either," the authors (Harriet Harriss, Naomi House, Monika Parrinder and Tom Ravenscroft) write in their preface. Alongside profiles on established talents like Mariam Issoufou Kamara, Tatiana Bilbao and Liz Diller (and a foreword by Alison Brooks), the book spotlights lesser-known practitioners like Kenyan architect Tatu Gatere, whose social enterprise company Buildher helps local young women gain accredited construction skills — and, by extension, agency in shaping the future of their cities.


All land, urban or rural, wild or toxic, comes with a deep history. The land precedes us and will survive us. It holds eons in layered and complex mysteries. The land is full. It has no end of stories to tell us if we are patient enough to listen.
Nelson Byrd Woltz
Landscape Architects
MONACELLI

The Land Is Full: Nelson Byrd Woltz Landscape Architects

"As landscape architects, when we first approach any site, it is with a simple act of grace: We ask its story and then begin to find the imprints left by the forces that have shaped it over time," writes Thomas Woltz in his introductory essay to this monograph. Indeed, the work of Nelson Byrd Woltz, the practice of which he is the senior principal and owner, seeks to counter the concept of land as a tabula rasa or generic green space. This philosophy is ever-present in the firm's body of work — as demonstrated through project case studies throughout this book, from the Brooklyn Naval Cemetery to Edmonton's Aga Khan Garden — which embraces a research-based approach that considers both ecology and culture to create a profound sense of place.


CALATRAVA
Complete Works 1979–Today
CALATRAVA
TASCHEN

Calatrava: Complete Works 1979–Today

The sculptural buildings of world-renowned Spanish architect Santiago Calatrava can be described as larger than life. The size of this monograph (which measures 30.7 by 39.1 centimetres and weighs a whopping 7.4 kilograms) is an appropriate indicator of this quality, but also of the breadth of his portfolio. The introduction by author Philip Jodidio gives an overview of Calatrava's four-decade career and varied design influences, plus a short Q and A with the architect about recent works such as the pavilions of the United Arab Emirates and Qatar at Expo 2020 Dubai and a monumental sculpture in Chicago. Full-bleed photography and original watercolour sketches bring the projects to life, highlighting their organic forms and illustrating the blend of art and technology that defines his oeuvre. A limited-run art edition — signed by the architect himself — includes two lithographs by Calatrava and a custom box.

2025

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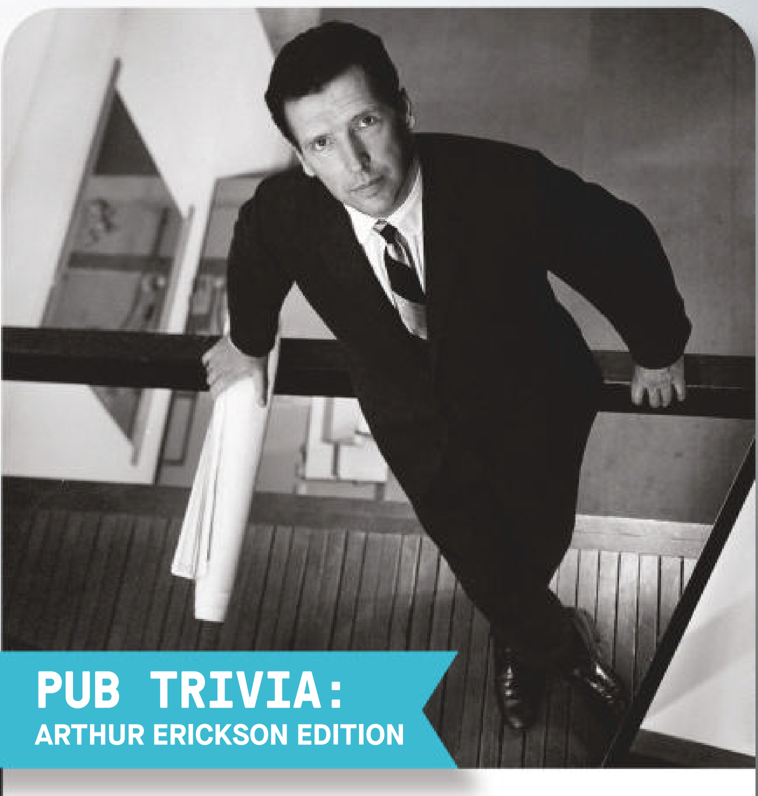
Arthurian Legend

WHAT ELSE COULD BE LEFT
TO SAY ABOUT ARTHUR ERICKSON?
SURPRISINGLY, QUITE A LOT

STORY _Eric Mutrie

Last year would have been the 100th birthday of one of Canada's best-known starchitects, who passed away in 2009. To mark this centennial, a wave of commemorations (many of them supported by the Arthur Erickson Foundation) encouraged fresh reassessment of a seemingly familiar figure. Vancouver's Museum of Anthropology kicked things off in June when it reopened after an 18-month closure. Updated seismic codes had required the Great Hall — Erickson's thoughtful adaptation of the post-and-beam architecture practised by coastal First Nations people — to be completely demolished and rebuilt to new standards. Architect Nick Milkovich, a disciple of Erickson's, executed a remarkably faithful update, installing base isolators beneath the main floor slab while staying true to his former boss's original vision.

In the months that followed, Erickson's legacy underwent a similarly bold reconstruction. *Arthur Erickson: Beauty Between the Lines*, a documentary by Ryan Mah and Danny Berish, headlines the 2024–2025 edition of the Architecture and Design Film Festival, which closes in Chicago in February. A rare exploration of Erickson's gay identity, the film highlights his personal and professional relationship with interior designer Francisco Kripacz; photos of lavish parties and sunny Fire Island getaways are juxtaposed with tales of working through the AIDS epidemic and a discussion of Erickson's bankruptcy (evidently, the flowers for all those parties didn't come cheap). Further Erickson insights came during historian Trevor Boddy's Eras-esque tour of public lectures last fall, and from recent exhibitions at the West Vancouver Art Museum and Canadian Centre for Architecture, which delved into the designer's domestic life and travel photography, respectively. All of which raises the question: Just how well do you know Arthur Erickson? **az**



PUB TRIVIA:
ARTHUR ERICKSON EDITION

1. What are some markers of Erickson's signature style?

Ⓐ An integration of architecture and nature
Ⓑ "Flying beams" that extend out from a building's walls
Ⓒ Waterfalls and cascading forms
Ⓓ All the above (Yes, we're starting off with an easy one.)

2. Erickson was the first Canadian architect to have received which accolade?

Ⓐ The Pritzker Prize
Ⓑ An Academy Award for Best Production Design
Ⓒ The AIA Gold Medal
Ⓓ An AZURE AZ Award

3. How old was Erickson when his paintings were featured in a gallery show at the Vancouver Art Gallery?

Ⓐ 6
Ⓑ 16
Ⓒ 19
Ⓓ 21

4. What inspired Erickson to become an architect rather than pursue his original plan for a career in diplomacy?

Ⓐ A *Fortune* magazine story about Frank Lloyd Wright
Ⓑ A trip to the 1939 New York World's Fair
Ⓒ *The Fountainhead*
Ⓓ *Metropolis*

5. Who played a cinematic stand-in for Erickson in the 1994 film *Intersection*?

Ⓐ Donald Sutherland
Ⓑ Michael Douglas
Ⓒ Richard Gere
Ⓓ Harrison Ford

6. Pierre Trudeau picked Erickson to design the Canadian Embassy in DC. Which firm had his jury selected instead?

Ⓐ Zeidler Roberts Partnership
Ⓑ Moriyama & Teshima
Ⓒ Smith Carter
Ⓓ Moshe Safdie

Answers: 1: D | 2: C | 3: B | 4: A | 5: C | 6: A

HOW MANY ANSWERS DID YOU GET CORRECT?
1: You've been to a concert at Roy Thomson Hall, but that's about it.
2–3: The selection committee is still out on your qualifications.
4–5: Good, but not quite AIA Gold Medal–worthy.
All 6: You're pretty EPPICH.

PHOTOS BY MICHAEL ELKAN, COURTESY OF THE MUSEUM OF ANTHROPOLOGY AT UBC (MUSEUM); FRED SCHIFFER (PORTRAIT)

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